A TREASURY OF
MYSTIC TERMS

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MYSTIC TERMS

PART III

SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE &
PRACTICE

VOLUME 11

WITH BIBLIOGRAPHY &
INDEX OF HEADWORDS

JOHN DAVIDSON

RADHA SOAMI SATSANG BEAS

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EDITED AND LARGELY WRITTEN BY

JOHN DAVIDSON

WITH THE HELP OF AN INTERNATIONAL TEAM

A Treasury of Mystic Terms has been compiled using the collective skills of an international team of researchers, contributors, assistant editors and readers with a wide variety of religious and cultural backgrounds. All members of the team are spiritual seekers, most of whom have found inspiration and encouragement in the teachings of the mystics of Beas in India. All those involved have given freely to this project, both as a source of inspiration for themselves, and as a way of showing to others the essential unity behind all the apparent variety in religion, philosophy, and mysticism.

Everybody has a perspective or a bias – coloured glasses through which they view the world. So although every attempt has been made to handle each entry within its own religious or mystical context, if any particular perspective is detected, it will inevitably be that of the contributors and their perception of mysticism. This does not mean, of course, that the contributors have always been in agreement. The preparation of the *Treasury* has often resulted in healthy debate!

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Acknowledgements

In the course of compiling and writing the *Treasury,* the editorial team have drawn on two major sources. Firstly, the scriptures and writings of mystics and others who have written on spiritual and mystical matters. Secondly, the works of scholars concerning these texts and their associated traditions. To all of these, we will be forever grateful. Among the mystics, we owe especial gratitude to the masters of Beas who have been, and who remain, the primary source of spiritual inspiration and perspective for most of the *Treasury'*s editorial team.

Sources of the many citations have been given in the references, endnotes, and bibliography. Among these are some that must receive special mention:

The translations of the Buddhist *Dhammapada* are founded mostly upon the work of S. Radhakrishnan and Narada Thera.

Most of the translations of the *Bhagavad Gītā* have drawn upon the earlier translations of S. Radhakrishnan and Swami Tapasyananda.

Quotations from the *Ādi Granth* are from English translations endorsed by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee.

The sayings of Heraclitus are found only as fragments, quoted in the works of other writers of antiquity. Various scholarly numbering systems exist for these fragments, the system employed here being that used by Philip Wheelwright in *Heraclitus* (Princeton University Press, 1959).

Most of the translations of Rūmī's *Maśnavī* are based upon the work of R.A. Nicholson.

Many scholarly translations of Zarathushtra's *Gāthās* into European languages have been made from defective Pahlavi translations. The translations here are from the Avestan, and are based largely on the original work of Dr I.R.S. Taraporewala.

For translations of the Buddhist Pali texts, we have made extensive use of *Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya,* tr. Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, ed. & rev. Bhikkhu Bodhi (1995); *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya,* tr. Maurice Walshe (1995); *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya,* 2 vols., tr. Bhikkhu Bodhi (2000); *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya,* tr. Bhikkhu Bodhi (2012); all published by Wisdom Publications of Somerville, Massachussetts; together with various

translations by Thanissaro Bhikkhu, published by Access to Insight (accesstoinsight.org and dhammatalks.org).

The indigenous Guaraní of eastern Paraguay, made up of three large subgroups – the Mbyá, the Paí Cayuá, and the Avá-Chiripá – are described in books and articles by the most notable experts in this field, Miguel Alberto Bartolomé, León Cádogan, Alfred Métraux, and Egon Schaden. Most of the information used for the Guaraní mystical terms derives from these scholars' studies of the Mybá and Avá-Chiripá. If a term is general to all indigenous Guaraní, it is labelled (G); if a term is known only to apply to the Avá-Chiripá subgroup, it is labelled (AC). The transliteration conventions used for all Avá-Chiripá terms are the same as those used in Miguel Alberto Bartolomé's article, *Shamanism and Religion Among the Avá-Chiripá,* which resulted from his field studies in the northeastern region of Paraguay in 1968 and 1969. Bartolomé explains that since Paraguayan Guaraní has an officially recognized written form, he does not use phonetic symbols except the letter 'y' for the sixth guttural vowel.

Particular acknowledgement must be made of the extensive compilation of material made by Dr Javad Nurbakhsh in his 15-volume *Farhang-i Nūrbakhsh: Iṣṭilāḥāt-i Taṣawwuf,* translated by Terry Graham *et al.* (1984–2001) as *Sufi Symbolism: The Nurbakhsh Encyclopedia of Sufi Terminology.* Dr Nurbakhsh's considerable contribution to Sufi literature has been of great help to us in the compilation of the Sufi entries in the *Treasury,* and we have drawn upon his work, both in the Persian and its English translation. The numerous extracts are reprinted by permission of Khaniqahi-Nimatullahi Publications.

Excerpts from *The Philokalia: The Complete Text, Compiled by St Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St Makarios of Corinth,* ed. & tr. G.E.H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, Kallistos Ware (Faber & Faber, London), copyright © by The Eling Trust (1979, 1981, 1984, 1995) are reprinted by permission of Metropolitan Kallistos and The Eling Trust.

Existing dictionaries and encyclopaedias are naturally of great assistance when preparing a work such as the *Treasury.* We gladly acknowledge the particular help we have received from *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Yoga,* Georg Feuerstein (Paragon House, New York, 1990); *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* ed. H.A.R. Gibb *et al.* (Brill, Leiden, 1960–2005); *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Zen Buddhism,* Helen Baroni (Rosen, New York, 2002); *Japanese-English Buddhist Dictionary,* Daito Shuppansha (Tokyo, 1965); *A Dictionary of Japanese Buddhist Terms,* Hisao Inagaki (Nagata Bunshodo, Kyoto, 1984); *Oxford Dictionary of Buddhism,* Damien Keown (Oxford University Press, 2003); *Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines,* Ven. Nyanatiloka (Buddhist Publication Society, Sri Lanka, 1988); *The*

Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism, Robert Buswell & Donald Lopez (Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 2014); *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the Hebrew Language for Readers of English,* ed. Ernest Klein (Carta Jerusalem, University of Haifa, 1987); *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Judaica Multimedia, Jerusalem, 1997); *Jewish Encyclopedia* (Funk & Wagnalls, New York, 1901–6, jewishencyclopedia.com); *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (Robert Appleton Co., 1907–14); *Wikipedia* (wikipedia.org, 2001–); *Hawaiian Dictionary*, Mary Kawena Pukui & Samuel Elbert (University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1986); *Te Aka: Māori-English, English-Māori Dictionary and Index,* John Moorfield (maoridictionary.co.nz); *A Dictionary of the Maori Language*, Herbert Williams (nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-WillDict.html); and *The A to Z of Jainism,* Kristi Wiley (Vision, New Delhi, 2006).

Thanks are also due to Dr John Smith, now retired from the Faculty of Oriental Studies, Cambridge University, for his Unicode character fonts.

The proposed twenty-three volumes of this work, of which sixteen have now been published, constitute a non-profit, educational, and scholarly project. The elucidation of terms and the numerous citations receive significant commentary, often bringing fresh insights regarding their meaning and relationship to other terms, with inter-faith comparison highlighted by the arrangement of entries under common subject headings. By these means we seek to contribute to spiritual understanding for global human benefit and the promotion of spiritual, religious, and cultural open-mindedness. We recognize that, in all probability, the authors of the original source texts wrote their works for the benefit of humanity, not for personal profit or acclaim. We have endeavoured to walk in their footsteps.

Preface to Part I

May I suggest that
You ask forgiveness for me
If my pen has gone astray or my foot has slipped.
For 'tis a perilous thing to plunge
Into the fathomless ocean of the divine mysteries;
And no easy task is it
To seek to discover the Lights Supernal
Which lie behind the veil.

Al-Ghazālī, *Mishkāt al-Anwār* 3:2, *MRG4* p.32;
cf. FSC p.159

Speech is at best an honest lie.

The Book of Mirdad, BOM p.68

This multivolume work is a collection, a treasury, a miscellany. Its primary objective is to elucidate the meaning of the essential terms used by the many different spiritual and religious traditions of the world throughout history. It is not primarily intended as a dictionary or as an encyclopaedia, nor is it a definitive treatise on any particular subject or religion. Its purpose is to help the ordinary person understand something of the basics concerning his or her religious background, within the framework of a universal understanding of spirituality.

Among these many pages, the reader will find a mixture. There should be something for everyone, whoever they are and whatever their bent of mind. But in a book of terms? That may sound unappealing, but there is a reason for it. Spiritual, mystical and religious teachings tend to use certain terms with particular meanings. Everyday words are often adopted, acquiring a special meaning in a spiritual context. Consequently, if a person wants to enquire deeply into his own religious background – or those of other cultures – it is essential that he understands the meaning of these terms. For if the symbols on the map are not understood, how can they be a guide to the destination?

A Treasury of Mystic Terms is therefore oriented around elucidating the meaning of these fundamental terms. But it is also much more than that. Some of the entries are extensive, more like essays. Moreover, the majority of these entries contain quotations that highlight the meaning of the term or group of terms under discussion. Many of these quotations are beautiful and inspiring; or they have a content that can be a guide in life. It is hoped, therefore, that this treasury will be a rich source of inspiration, as well as information.

Many people read books by dipping in here and there, even though the book may have been put together as a progression of ideas, not really designed for 'dipping'. This book is designed for the 'dipper'! And while it is certain that not everything in it will appeal to everyone, there should be something in it that will appeal to everyone. It is a book for browsing. So if the reader alights on something that does not appeal to him or her, he or she need only move on until something else is found that does.

The arrangement of terms by subject has been made after considerable deliberation. As a system, it may have its imperfections, not the least of which is that the terms depicting the universal spiritual principles of life do not always fall easily into neat categories. Sometimes, a term may have meanings that span a number of subject areas. Even keeping the topics as broad as possible, this is bound to happen from time to time. But the advantage is that a reader can browse a particular subject area with great ease. Reviewing the material that has been collected, and considering the kind of readers it is likely to attract, it has seemed clear that the majority of readers will not be looking up the meaning of particular terms so much as wanting to obtain information on a particular subject, or simply to browse at random. The alternative arrangement of terms in a continuous A to Z sequence would pose significant difficulties for the reader wanting to browse or make a comparative study of a particular subject. If anyone wants to look up any particular term, consulting the indices should reveal where the term is located.

One of the fascinating aspects of universal spirituality is that its common denominator from a human perspective is not religious beliefs, nor educational systems, nor social structures, nor anything else like that. Its common denominator is people. It is fundamental to people, something present in all human beings. So, while reading about a particular topic as discussed and understood in one tradition, it is interesting to see how much commonality there is in the way that other religions and cultures have understood the same subject. Often, even the same metaphors and examples have been used by mystics with thousands of both years and miles between them. It also becomes evident how one religion borrows from and influences another, especially in its formative years. All this is highlighted by the simple expedient of arranging the terms by subject.

But what is meant by universal spirituality? It is the common ground, present in all religious and spiritual traditions. It is spirituality in the absence of religious creeds and specific belief systems. It is generic, not 'brand-specific'. It is inclusive, not exclusive, acknowledging a common basis to all traditions. It recognizes the existence of a God by whatever name He may be known and by whatever concepts He is understood – whether as a Supreme Being or Consciousness, a divine Energy, the Essence and Source of all things, a divine Intelligence and Controller, a Creator, an immanent or utterly transcendent power, and so on. It understands that human beings feel themselves to be separate from the Divine, and it includes the fundamental goal of probably all religions: the quest for a personal relationship with that primal Source. It emphasizes experience over belief and dogma, direct perception over philosophy and theology.

Since one of the intentions of this book has been an attempt to interpret correctly the *original* meaning of the writers of the many quotations, many of whom lived centuries or millennia ago, it may contain errors of interpretation. Certainly, there will be differences of opinion regarding interpretations. This is all to the good. The idea has never been to tell the reader what to think or what is what. If the reader is stimulated to think for himself, then our purpose has been accomplished. Everyone has to make his own journey and discover Truth for himself. But that Truth will not be found in this book, nor in any other; for the best that books can offer is inspiration, not personal experience. But then, that may also be understood as an opinion. So take it as such, and follow your heart wherever it may lead.

Preface to Part III

In Part I we introduced the fundamentals of universal spirituality and mysticism. Part II covered the many varieties of spiritual practitioner and the all-important role of the spiritual guide. The present six volumes of the *Treasury,* which constitute Part III, address the topic of spiritual awareness, together with the various practices adopted in the attempt to realize our essentially pure and pristine spiritual nature – to awaken consciousness that we are spiritual beings lost in a material world, who are able, during our lifetimes, to prepare for the inevitable day of departure.

Our primary intention has remained the same since the outset of this project – to present the world's spiritual traditions so that they may be seen and understood with a comparative eye by a non-specialist reader. With the on-going globalization of our world, the need for understanding and tolerance regarding the beliefs and practices of others has become increasingly apparent. Humanity is urgently in need of a spirituality that transcends the external aspects of religion and culture, that nourishes an understanding of what it means to be human, and that provides guidance on how to live a worthwhile and spiritually fruitful life.

Editorial Notes

Translations of the many texts quoted are either original or have been taken from published translations, although, in some instances, our choice of accepted translations of primary sacred texts has been limited. In the interests of clarity and after consulting the original source language wherever possible, some translations have been lightly edited or have had explanatory words added in parentheses. We have, for instance, tended to modernize old-fashioned English. In some cases, where a number of scholarly translations are available of a particular text, we have made a collation, indicating this by a reference to the various sources consulted. Further, because of the variety of typographic styles found in the many quotations, we have standardized the layout, as well as the spelling, punctuation, and capitalization of words. This prevents frequent inconsistencies in the text which may have resulted in confusion. Further, to avoid the confusion to the eye caused by overpunctuation, we have also dispensed with the use of an ellipsis (three dots) when the text we quote begins or ends in mid-sentence of the original. Reported conversations and material quoted within the main text are identified with double quote marks ("…"), single quote marks being reserved for 'particularized' text or quotes within double quote marks. The aim has always been to help convey meaning with clarity, accuracy, and simplicity.

Any significant clarifications or additions to a translation offered by ourselves or the original translator have been placed in round brackets, while significant conjectured words or phrases, usually provided by the original translator to fill gaps in an original, defective manuscript, appear in square brackets ([]). In the interests of readability, some of the square and round brackets of the original translations have been omitted where the correctness of the bracketed text seemed reasonable. Where translations used have been edited for any reason, this is indicated by the use of *cf.* (Latin, *confero,* 'I compare') in the source reference.

We have, for example, made extensive use of R.A. Nicholson's translation of Rūmī's *Maśnavī,* taking Nicholson at his word,[1] and using his translation as a basis for most of our own. In many cases, our text simply chooses optional text suggested in brackets or footnotes, often omitting the brackets to improve readability. We have also occasionally used a synonym for some word or other, especially those of an abstruse or rare nature. Antiquated English has also been modernized, particularly as

regards the use of 'thee', 'thou', and so on. But generally we have stayed close to Nicholson's translation. Quotations containing deviations from Nicholson's translation, other than punctuation and layout, have been referenced with a *cf.*

Most non-English words are italicized, with the exception of the proper names of people and places, either historical or legendary. However, the names of gods and goddesses are italicized. In translated quotations, terms under discussion and other relevant terms have been placed in brackets following their translation.

As far as possible, quotations are referenced to both an original language source and a particular translation where this is not our own. However, in a few instances, especially among the Arabic and Persian (Sufi) entries, the primary source of passages has not always been given in the secondary source where we have found them, and we have sometimes been unable to trace the primary source. In these relatively few instances, we provide just the reference to the secondary source. If any reader who knows the text we are quoting is able to supply the primary source reference for use in the next edition, we would, of course, be grateful to receive it.

Generally speaking, non-English terms are used for the entry headword where they are still in common use or where they are familiar to readers of the ancient literature. Where the term would only be meaningful to a handful of specialist scholars – as with Mandaean, Syriac, early Mesopotamian texts, and so on – the term has usually been given in English. Only when such non-English terms are of particular interest are they used as headwords.

The attempt has been made to use those translations of the Bible, Jewish and Christian, which have meaning for the reader and elucidate the mystic sense of the terms under discussion. It is worth noting that chapter and verse numbers sometimes vary slightly between Christian and Jewish translations. This mostly affects the *Psalms,* which in the Jewish translations are generally one verse longer because the initial salutation is numbered as verse one.

Entries for most non-English terms begin with a *'Lit.'* – meaning 'literally'. This is not intended as an etymology of the word. Normally, it refers to the literal or everyday meaning of the word, disregarding any mystical or spiritual context. Sometimes, in order to increase readability of the literal definition, we also include the definite ('the') or indefinite article ('a'), although the equivalent article may not be present in the original language of the term as given. Some terms given in English are followed by a short definition of their mundane meaning where this could be helpful to the reader, particularly as it relates to the use of the term in mystical literature.

Many entries end with 'See also: …'. The terms so listed should be taken only as suggestions for further browsing. They lead either to entries where the same term is further elucidated, or to entries with comparable or sometimes specifically contrasting meanings, either in the same or different languages. Consecutive terms that are very similar are not normally so listed, since they are easily seen.

Our use of capitalization is largely as a means of succinctly conveying information. Generally, we have tried not to be 'capitalists', since their overuse can make a text uneven and more difficult to read; but capitals can be useful, and are sometimes the correct form to use, as in proper names. Although languages such as Arabic, Persian, Hebrew, Aramaic, Sanskrit, Hindi and Punjabi have no capitals, we have followed a common custom and used capitals in romanized transliteration. Names of God or the Supreme Being are capitalized, as are most pronouns referring to God (*viz.* You, Your, Yourself, He, Him, Himself, Thee, Thou, Thine, Thyself, We, Me, and Myself). This makes it clear who is being referenced without necessarily having to indicate it in some other way. Specific names for the creative power are also capitalized to highlight their meaning in that context *(e.g.* Wisdom, Name, Word, *Shabd, Davar, Kalimah).* However, unlike Part I, names and metaphors for masters *(e.g.* shepherd, *satguru, murshid, etc.)* are all lowercased. The terms used for some essential concepts outside these categories have also been capitalized, such as the Muslim 'Names *(Asmā')*' 'Attributes *(Ṣifāt)*', 'Acts *(Afʿāl)*', and 'Signs' or 'Works *(Āthār)*' of *Allāh.* Usually, the names of the higher regions of creation have not been capitalized, although it is true that some are used as proper names. There are simply too many of them, and the text would have become too cumbersome. However, where these terms are non-English, they are in italics, which helps identify their special meaning.

With regard to the dating system, we have used the more universally oriented CE (Common Era) and BCE (Before Common Era), rather than AD *(Anno Domini),* BC (Before Christ), AH *(Anno Hegirae),* or SH (Solar Hijri). To use a dating system based on context – Christian, Jewish, Indian, or Muslim – would simply cause too much confusion.

Because of modern attitudes, writers in English are faced with a difficulty concerning the use of 'he', 'him' and so forth, when in fact referring to *all* human beings – men *and* women. In the past, a generalized person or individual was always referred to as a 'he', and that was that. In present times, people are more sensitive. However, the contortions of language required to avoid the use of gender-specific words in a tightly worded text such as this have sometimes forced us to revert to the more traditional use of the masculine, even when the feminine is also clearly included. Most English speakers forget that in many other languages, where words themselves have a gender, such problems do not exist. The

genders of a 'person', of 'God', of the 'Spirit' – and so on – are simply a rule of language. In French, for instance, a person *(une personne)* is feminine, but a human being *(un être humain)* is masculine. Hence, such sentences as *'Bill est une personne, Mary est un être humain'* and *'Dieu n'est ni une personne ni un être humain'* are correct. It is unlikely that this solution will please everybody, but we have done our best. So far as the editors are concerned, all human beings share a common and natural equality, regardless of sex, race, colour, religion, social position, or any other external difference. God, of course, is far beyond all physical attributes, even if it is traditional to speak of that divine Power as a 'He'.

For many terms, there is a spread of meaning and usage among the various schools that represents the tradition from which the term has arisen. Some analyse and understand the meaning in one way, some in another. Likewise, the meaning of many terms has changed with the passage of time. In some instances, we have indicated these differences in meaning, at other times we have not. Since this is a book of mystical terms intended for a reader who is interested in spirituality, we have endeavoured to follow a middle path, focusing on the mystical meaning of terms, without getting into conceptual and intellectual analysis of the various shades of meaning.

Languages and Transliteration Systems

Since this *Treasury* is intended as much for the lay reader as the specialist, every attempt has been made to make the text and its presentation accessible, rather than daunting. It is, after all, a book about mysticism, not language. This has meant, for example, that while our transliteration of the various languages has been based upon standard scholarly systems, we have sometimes adapted these according to our own editorial guidelines, simplifying things where it makes for better readability or is less likely to confuse a lay reader. Thus, for example, we write Kṛishṇa and *shabd,* rather than the more scholarly Kṛṣṇa and *śabd.*

Each of the headwords with which the entries start is also accorded a language code (see below). Where more than one language code is given, the order represents – where relevant – the historical evolution of the word through the various languages. Thus, (S/H/Pu) indicates that the Sanskrit (S) preceded the Hindi (H) and the Punjabi (Pu), (S/Pa) that the Sanskrit preceded the Pali (Pa), and (A/P) that the Arabic (A) preceded the Persian (P). While this is largely accurate, languages are not so conveniently structured that the words comprising them can be neatly, unambiguously and incontrovertibly categorized and labelled. In fact, the language or languages to which a word or term belongs are not always clearly definable. This is particularly true between Arabic and Persian, and between Sanskrit, Hindi, and Punjabi. The designation (H),

for example, also includes a number of North Indian vernacular variants, used by various saints in their poetry.

There are also a great many Arabic words that have become a part of Persian. And although Arabic and Persian share a common script, and many words are written with the same spelling, the pronunciation is significantly different. In the case of Arabic and Persian, we have followed a simplified version of the US Library of Congress transliteration system which uses letter-for-letter romanization rather than attempting to render the words entirely phonetically. Some allowances for the differences between Arabic and Persian pronunciation are accounted for, but in general this system favours Arabic pronunciation. This is unfortunate for Persian, and we are aware of it, but the alternative would be to romanize most words in two different ways, depending upon whether the word is being used in an Arabic or Persian context. Using such a system, many romanized spellings of the same word would become significantly different from each other, causing confusion to the reader who knows neither language, and is unlikely to pronounce either word correctly, however they are romanized. Moreover, it would also require us to assess the likely pronunciation of authors, many of whom lived centuries ago – a more or less impossible task.

The Arabic-Persian situation is further compounded by the fact that many Persian Sufis have written all or parts of their texts in Arabic. The *Qur'ān,* for example, is commonly quoted in its original Arabic, even when the main text is in Persian. In some instances, therefore, were a strictly phonetic system being employed, one quote may require the use of two different romanizations of the same word! It is therefore with apologies to the sentiments of Persian readers that we have used the system outlined above which phonetically favours the Arabic. Although largely insensitive to Persian pronunciation, this is simply the least confusing way of doing things for the majority of our English-speaking readers.

In many cases, the Persian term is the same as the Arabic except for the addition of the definite article *(al-)* in Arabic. In these instances, to avoid unnecessary repetition, the language designation is given as (A/P). Also, when *al-* occurs in a leading headword, it is placed after the headword itself (*e.g.* **insān al-kāmil**, **al-**). In keeping with common practice, names that include *al-,* such as al-Ghazālī are spelled with a lowercased *al-,* unless they happen to start a sentence.

For Pali, the language of the early Buddhist scriptures, which was largely an oral language with no unique script of its own, we have used a slightly simplified version of a standard method of romanization employing diacritical marks.

For Jain texts and terms, although early Jain texts were written in Prakrit *(Ardhamāgadhī* for *Shvetāmbara* and *Shaursenī* for *Digambara),*

we have generally followed the standard Jain convention of using Sanskrit for the names of texts and the terms used therein.

When it comes to Sanskrit and Hindi, we are on firmer ground because there is a more or less standard and accepted transliteration of the *devanāgarī* alphabet. In this instance, we have used a simplified version of this carefully worked-out system to make it easier for the layperson to read.

Punjabi is transliterated in a manner compatible with the Hindi and Sanskrit. The designation of words to particular languages, however, is not straightforward. While the purists may insist, for example, that some words are not Hindi, but Punjabi (and *vice versa*), the reality is that neither the spoken nor written languages are clearly defined. Words have travelled from one language to the other and back again, and in many parts of North India, the two languages are inextricably intertwined. Moreover, we are dealing with texts spanning many centuries, during which time these languages themselves, as well as the spelling of many words, have changed, evolved, and merged. The Punjabi of the *Ādi Granth,* for instance, though the common Punjabi of the times when it was written, is different from modern Punjabi, just as the English of Chaucer is different from the English of today. Therefore, the allocation of a language code to some of the terms should only be taken as a general indication. There can never be a precise allocation. Also, terms such as *alakh lok* (Pu. imperceptible region), for instance, which have a Sanskrit equivalent *(alakshya-loka)* that is not actually used in the same way in Sanskrit literature, are not identified in the *Treasury* as Sanskrit terms. When allocating language abbreviations our intention is to identify whether the term is actually used in a mystical context in the literature of that particular language.

A further source of confusion exists regarding the use of compound words in Sanskrit, which are often – but not always – split into individual words in Hindi, Punjabi, and the various associated vernaculars. We have therefore adopted the following system as a reasonable compromise. Compound Hindi or Punjabi words are generally rendered as separate words, regardless of how they appear in the source text *(e.g. haṭha yoga).* Compound Sanskrit and Pali words are either spelled as one word, or they are hyphenated in order to indicate the various elements of the word, or they are rendered as separate words. This permits the layman's eye to note that the Sanskrit word or term is the equivalent to the Hindi or Punjabi. Terms or names that use a generic word are generally spelled separately *(e.g. Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad, mūlādhāra chakra).* However, a number of exceptions to these rules are made for a number of reasons *(e.g. Brahmaloka, satyaloka, padmāsana).*

Because of the way written language evolves over time, one word may be spelled in various ways, even in the original language. Again,

we have opted for a simplifying approach. We have certainly not tried to be exhaustive of all the variants of particular words. A number of these are either vernacular variations or have even been coined by individual writers simply to meet the poetic needs of rhythm and rhyme. In these instances, we have generally used the word in its 'uncorrupted' modern form, even though identification of the 'uncorrupted' form is sometimes a matter of opinion. For example, terms such as *Shabd* (Word) and *desh* (region) also appear as the Hindi vernacular variants *Sabd* and *des.* In many instances, however, we have simply indicated the usage of such terms in quotations as *Shabd* and *desh.* In the Punjabi of the *Ādi Granth,* however, where there the 'sh' sound is absent, we have used the 's' form of a term throughout, and have generally been more precise in our transliteration of terms from the *Ādi Granth.* Where a word or name has become anglicized through common usage, like the names of Indian states or the names of contemporary or recent spiritual leaders, we have used the anglicized form, without italics or diacritical marks.

We have used a similar simplifying approach to terms of more than one word where the order of the words in the original language has been changed to meet the needs of the poetry or for some other reason. Further, when illustrating the usage of particular words, we have commonly treated grammatical inflections as the root word itself. For instance, when a word in an original language translates to a phrase in English such as 'with God' or 'from God', we treat it as an example of the root word, without pointing out that it is an inflection that is actually being used.

The same is true of the plural forms of words. We have given these only when relevant to the particular discussion, but not as a matter of course. In fact, especially among Indian languages, following a common custom in English literature, we have generally used a romanized plural form. Hence the use of such hybrid words as *siddhis, bhikkhus,* and *yogīs.*

The transliterated spelling of the Hebrew terms follows a modified version of the Library of Congress system, which corresponds in many instances to the treatment of Arabic. The significant differences are in disregarding the *aleph,* otherwise transliterated as a superior comma (Ś), and in rendering both the *kaf* and the *qaf* with the letter *k,* rather than *k* and *q.* In contemporary Hebrew, there is no difference in pronunciation between the two letters and, in most modern transliterations, they are rendered the same.

Transliteration of Chinese poses greater problems than most other languages. Chinese is a tonal language, where each character (word) is pronounced with one of five tonal inflexions (pitch and direction of sound). There are, for instance, more than twenty-five characters all transliterated as *'ma',* each with a different meaning – *e.g.* mother, hemp, horse, curse, and question. In writing, pitch variations can be indicated

by the addition of either tone marks or tone numbers. Thus, *ma* (mother) is rendered as *mā* or *ma*[1], and *ma* (hemp) as *má* or *ma*[2]. Which word is intended is generally conveyed by the tone mark or number, together with its context, though there is the added challenge of multiple characters not only being transliterated the same, but having the same tone!

Tone marks are not normally added to Chinese text, but in dictionaries, encyclopaedias and scholarly texts, tone marks or tone numbers are often employed. In these instances, wherever roman transliterations are used, a tone mark or number usually accompanies the word, especially when one word has different meanings depending on the pronunciation. In this publication, tone marks in the form of accents or diacritical marks have been used, following the Pinyin system of romanization that has been used as the standard system in the Peoples' Republic of China since 1958.

1. R.A. Nicholson, *Introduction, Maśnavī,* MJR2 pp.xv–xvii.

ABBREVIATIONS

General

Abbreviations that are a common part of written language are not included in this list.

C4th	fourth century (*e.g.)*
cf.	*confero,* compare (L. I compare)
col.	column
fol.	folio
ff.	and the following (pages, lines, *etc.*)
lit.	literally
n.	foot- or endnote(s)
passim	here and there throughout (L)
p.	page
pp.	pages
pron.	pronounced
ret.	retrieved web page, followed by the month and year of retrieval
▸1 ▸2 ▸4	Indicates a yet-to-be-published entry in Parts I, II, or IV

Dates

b.	born
c.	circa, about
d.	died
fl.	flourished
r.	reigned or ruled
AH	*Anno Hegirae,* Muslim lunar calendar, from 622 CE, the Hegira *(al-Hijrah),* the year of Muḥammad's flight to Madīnah
BCE	Before Common Era, equivalent to BC.
CE	Common Era, equivalent to AD.
SH	Solar Hijri, the official solar calendar of Iran and Afghanistan, starting on the vernal equinox.

Languages

A Arabic	Av Avestan	Fr French
AC Avá-Chiripá	C Chinese	G Guaraní
Am Aramaic	Es Spanish	Gk Greek

H	Hindi	Md	Mandaean	Pv	Pahlavi
He	Hebrew	Mo	Māori	S	Sanskrit
Hw	Hawaian	P	Persian	Su	Sumerian
J	Japanese	Pa	Pali	T	Tibetan
L	Latin	Pk	Prakrit	U	Urdu
M	Marathi	Pu	Punjabi		

Sources Cited

See *Bibliography* for full details of published works. Published collections of the writings of Indian Saints have been referred to in source references as below. Other collections published as the *Bānī, Granthāvalī, Padāvalī* or *Shabdāvalī* of various Indian Saints have been similarly abbreviated.

Bullā Sāhib kā Shabd Sār	*Shabd Sār*
Charaṇdās Jī kī Bānī	*Bānī*
Dariyā Sāhib ke chune hue Shabd	*Chune hue Shabd*
Dhanī Dharamdās Jī kī Shabdāvalī	*Shabdāvalī*
Kabīr Granthāvalī	*Granthāvalī*
Kabīr Sāhib kā Bījak	*Bījak*
Kabīr Sākhī Sangrah	*Sākhī Sangrah*
Keshavdās Jī kī Amīghūnt	*Amīghūnt*
Kullīyāt-i Bulleh Shāh	*Kullīyāt*
Mīrā Bṛihat Padāvalī	*Bṛihat Padāvalī*
Mīrā Sudhā Sindhu	*Sindhu*
Nāmdev kī Hindi Padāvalī	*Padāvalī*
Ravidās Darshan	*Darshan*
Sant Guru Ravidās Vāṇī	*Vāṇī*
Shrī Nāmdev Gāthā	*Gāthā*
Tulsīdās kī Bārahmāsī	*Bārahmāsī*
Tulsī Sāhib Hāthrasvale kī Shabdāvalī	*Shabdāvalī*

Other books and texts cited are abbreviated as below. Full details are in the bibliography:

AA	"Apocrypha Anecdota II," tr. M.R. James.
AAA	*The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles,* 2 vols., tr. W.R. Wright.
AAF1–2	*Awrād al-Aḥbāb wa Fuṣūṣ al-Ādāb,* 2 vols., Abū-al-Mufākhir Yahyā Bākharzī, ed. Iraj Afshār.
AAGA	*Shrimad Räjchandra's Ätmasiddhi,* tr. Manu Doshi.
AAK	*Aḥwāl wa Aqwāl-i Shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan Kharaqānī,* ed. Mujtabā Mīnuwī.
ABSC	*Atma-Bodha of Śrī Ādi Śaṅkarācārya,* Swami Chinmayananda.

ADAF	*Açvaghosha's Discourse on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahâyâna,* tr. Teitaro Suzuki.
ADBM	*Arte de bien morir y guia del camino de la muerte,* A. de Alvarado.
ADP	*Abandonment to Divine Providence,* J.-P. de Caussade, tr. J. Beevers.
AEB143	"Religion and Shamanism," Alfred Métraux.
AETR	*Asceticism in Early Taoist Religion,* Stephen Eskildsen.
AF1–2	*The Apostolic Fathers,* 2 vols., tr. Kirsopp Lake.
AFCS	*Access and Fixed Concentration,* Venerable Sujivo.
AFH	*Al-Rawḍ al-Fā'iq,* al-Hurayfish.
AFHD	*Aristotle,* W. Jaeger.
AFYH	*The Awakening of Faith,* tr. Yoshito Hakeda.
AGC	*Sri Guru Granth Sahib,* 4 vols., tr. Pritam Singh Chahil.
AGG	*Sri Guru Granth Sahib,* 4 vols., tr. Dr Gopal Singh.
AGK	*Sri Guru Granth Sahib: Khalsa Consensus Translation,* tr. Dr Sant Singh Khalsa.
AGSS	*Aspirant's Guide,* Shri Atmanandji (Dr Soneji).
AGT	*Sri Guru Granth Sahib,* 4 vols., tr. Dr Gurbachan Singh Talib.
AH1–2	*Against Heresies,* in *The Writings of Irenaeus,* 2 vols., tr. A. Roberts & W.H. Rambaud.
AITD	*Adventures in Immortality,* G. Gallup & W. Proctor.
AITM	*Ancient Indian Tradition & Mythology Series,* ed. J.L. Shastri & G.P. Bhatt.
AKF	*All the King's Falcons,* John Renard.
AKKS	*Ācārya Kundakunda's Samayasāra,* tr. A. Chakravarti.
AKYS	*Awa Kenzō: ōi naru sha no michi no oshie,* Yasunosuke Sakurai.
ALAH	*'Avodat ha-Levi,* Aharon Halevi Horowitz of Staroselye.
ALSE	*As Long As Space Endures,* ed. Edward Arnold.
ALTS	*Amṛtacandrasūri's Laghutattvasphoṭa,* Amṛtacandra, tr. P.S. Jaini.
AM	*'Awārif al-Ma'ārif,* Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī (1855).
AMAS	*Al-Mu'jam al-Ṣūfī,* Khānam Dr Su'ād al-Ḥakīm.
AMBB	*Ānāpānasati,* Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu, tr. Bhikkhu Nagasena.
AMBF	*Aḥādīś-i Maśnavī,* B. Furūzānfar.
AMCB	*Ancient Mystery Cults,* W. Burkert.
AMCJ	*The Ascent of Mount Carmel,* St John of the Cross, tr. D. Lewis, ed. B. Zimmerman.
AMEI	*Te Aka: Māori-English, English-Māori Dictionary and Index,* John Moorfield.
AMHS	"How the Ari Created a Myth and Transformed Judaism," Howard Schwartz.
AMM	*Dīvān-i Ḥakīm Abū al-Majd Majdūd ibn-i Ādam Sanā'ī Ghaznavī,* ed. Mudarris Riżavī.

AMMB	*Some Aspects of Maori Myth and Religion,* Elsdon Best.
AMNA	*Ādāb al-Murīdīn,* ʿAbdul-Qāhir ben ʿAbdullah as-Sahrawardi, with *Dāʿi al-Falāḥ ila Subulan-Najāḥ,* Muḥammad ben Muḥammad al-Marṣafi, ed. ʿĀsim Ibrāhīm al-Kayāli.
AMNS	*Ādāb al-Murīdayn,* Najīb Suhravardī, tr. Aḥmad Sherkhān, ed. Najīb Māyil-i Hiravī.
AMPK	"An Ancient Maori Poem," Tuhoto-Ariki, tr. G.H. Davies & J.H. Pope.
AMSB	*Āpta-Mīmāṁsā of Ācārya Samantabhadra,* tr. S. Ghosal.
AMSS	*The Ancient Mysteries,* ed. Marvin Meyer.
AMU	*ʿAwārif al-Maʿarif,* Shihāb al-Dīn ʿAbū Hafs ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī.
AMZ	*Arzish-i Mīrāś-i Ṣūfīyah,* ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Zarrīn Kōb.
ANB1–3	*Aṅguttara Nikāya,* 3 parts, tr. N. Thera & Bhikkhu Bodhi.
ANER	*Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics,* tr. H. Rackham.
ANKN	*Anguttara Nikaya,* tr. K. Nizamis.
ANNK	*Anguttara Nikaya,* tr. Ñanavara Thera & Bhikkhu Kantasilo.
ANPT	*Anguttara Nikaya,* tr. Piyadassi Thera.
ANST	*Anguttara Nikaya,* tr. Soma Thera.
ANT	*The Apocryphal New Testament,* tr. M.R. James.
ANTB	*Anguttara Nikaya,* tr. Thanissaro Bhikkhu.
ANTE	*The Apocryphal New Testament,* ed. J.K. Elliott.
ANTH	*The Authentic New Testament,* tr. H.J. Schonfield.
AOCM	*The Arena,* Ignatius Brianchaninov, tr. Archimandrite Lazarus.
AOT	*The Apocryphal Old Testament,* ed. H.E.D. Sparks.
APAK	*Ashta Pahuda,* Acharya Kundkund, tr. Paras Das Jain Niyaytirthi.
APAP	*Applied Philosophy of Anekanta,* Samani S. Prajna.
APAW	*Abhandlungen der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.*
APG1–4	*Agni Purāṇa,* 4 vols., tr. N. Gangadharan.
APJ1–2	*Ādi Purāṇa,* 2 vols., Ācārya Jinasena, tr. Pannalal Jain.
APJJ	*Ādi Purāṇa,* Jinasena.
APN	"Absence and Presence," Javad Nurbakhsh.
APOA	*The Art of Prayer,* I. Chariton, tr. E. Kadloubovsky & E.M. Palmer.
ARLC	"Ayvu Rapyta," León Cádogan.
ASAM	*A Manual of Abhidhamma,* tr. Nārada Mahā Thera.
ASCH	*Āvaśyaka Sūtra with comm. of Haribhadra.*
ASK1–3	*The Arrow and the Spindle,* 3 vols., Samten G. Karmay.
ASNC	*Apocryphal Scriptures; BDK English Tripiṭaka Series.*
ASPP	*Aṣṭā-sāhasrikā Prajñā-pāramitā,* ed. Rājendralāla Mitra.
ASSN	*Aṣṭāvakra Saṁhitā,* tr. Swami Nityaswarupananda.
ATI	Access to Insight, accesstoinsight.org.
ATS1–2	*Asrār al-Tawḥīd fī Maqāmāt al-Shaykh Abī Saʿīd,* 2 vols., M. ibn Munavvar, ed. & intro. Muḥammad Rażā Shafāʾī Kadkanī.

ATTM	*Plenus Aruch,* 8 vols., Nathan ben Jehiel of Rome, ed. A. Kohut.
AVPS	*Anathma Vigarhana Prakaranam,* tr. P.R. Ramachander.
AVVN	*Aṣṭasāhasrī,* Vidyānanda, ed. Vaṃṣīdhara.
AYA	*The Holy Qur'ān,* tr. ʿAbdullah Yūsuf ʿAlī.
AYAY	*American Yoga,* Carrie Schneider.
AZJW	*The A to Z of Jainism,* Kristi Wiley.
AZPD	*A to Z Photo Dictionary,* Mark Schumacher.
BAEZ	*The Bodhidharma Anthology,* Jeffery L. Broughton.
BAMT	*Bhagavatī Ārādhanā,* Ācārya Śivārya, with *Vijayodayāṭikā,* Aparājita Sūri.
BAST	*Baddei ha-Aron u-Migdal Ḥananel,* Shem Tov ben Abraham ibn Gaon.
BASW	*Beshara and Ibn ʿArabi,* Suha Taji-Farouki.
BAUS	*Buddha Abhidhamma: Ultimate Science,* Mehm Tin Mon.
BBDG	*A Buddhist Bible,* Dwight Goddard.
BC	*The Books of Jeu and the Untitled Text in the Bruce Codex,* tr. Violet MacDermot.
BCSD	*Buddhist Chinese-Sanskrit Dictionary,* Akira Hirakawa.
BDBL	*The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature,* H. Dayal.
BDC	*The Book of Divine Consolation of the Blessed Angela of Foligno,* tr. M. Steegman.
BDH	*Bar Hebraeus's Book of the Dove,* tr. A.J. Wensinck.
BDK	Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai America, Society for the Promotion of Buddhism.
BDTN	*Bonpo Dzogchen Teachings,* ed. John Reynolds.
BDV1–6	*The Book of the Discipline,* 6 vols., tr. I.B. Horner.
BDVA	*Beholders of Divine Secrets,* Vita Daphna Arbel.
BEDC	*Buddhism: Its Essence and Development,* Edward Conze.
BES	*Black Elk Speaks,* John Neihardt.
BESW	*Black Elk*, Wallace Black Elk & William Lyon.
BEW	*Little Book of Eternal Wisdom and Little Book of Truth,* Henry Suso, tr. James M. Clark.
BF4	*The Buddhist Forum,* vol. 4, ed. Tadeusz Skorupski.
BFGG	*But for the Grace of God,* J.W.N. Sullivan.
BGT	*Bhagavad Gītā,* tr. Swāmī Tapasyānanda.
BJGC	*The Book of Jubilees or Little Genesis,* tr. R.H. Charles.
BKKS	"Der Begriff der Kawwana in der alten Kabbala," G.G. Scholem.
BL1–158	*Bodhi Leaves* (Magazine).
BL15	*Buddhist Meditation,* Francis Story.
BLB	*The Book of the Lover and the Beloved,* Ramón Lull, tr. E.A. Peers.
BLD1–3	*Buddhist Legends,* 3 vols., Buddhaghosa, tr. E.W. Burlingame.
BLPD	*Being and Logos: Reading the Platonic Dialogues,* J. Sallis.

BLTG	*Taoist Teachings: From the Book of Lieh Tzŭ,* tr. Lionel Giles.
BMC1–2	*Buddhist Monastic Code,* 2 parts, tr. Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.
BMJ1–2	*Bet ha-Midrash,* 2 vols., A. Jellinek.
BMK	*The Book of Margery Kempe,* ed. Barry Windeatt.
BMME	*The Besht: Magician, Mystic, and Leader,* Immanuel Etkes.
BMP	"Bruchstücke manichäisch-parthischer Parabelsammlungen," I. Colditz.
BMPE	*A Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics,* tr. C.A.F. Rhys Davids.
BNJM	*Bàopǔzǐ nèipiān jiàoshì,* Wáng Míng.
BNTW	*Buddhism in Nepal and Tibet,* ed. Paul Williams.
BNUS	*Buddha Nature,* Arya Maitreya, comm. Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thayé, expl. Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, tr. R. Fuchs.
BOM	*The Book of Mirdad,* Mikhail Naimy.
BOS	*Badāyi',* tr. Lucas White King.
BPPT	*The Book of Protection,* Piyadassi Thera.
BPS	Buddhist Publication Society, bps.lk.
BPSG	*The Book of the Poor in Spirit,* A Friend of God, tr. C.F. Kelley.
BPT1–5	*The Bhāgavata Purāṇa,* 5 vols., tr. & ann. G.V. Tagare.
BPYY	*Ben Porat Yosef,* Yaʿakov Yosef (Jacob Joseph) of Polnoye.
BRTH	*The Biographies of Rechungpa,* Peter Roberts.
BSBS	*Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya of Srī Śaṅkarācārya,* tr. Swami Gambhirananda.
BSCC	"Buddhism and Suicide: The Case of Channa," Damien Keown.
BSGW	*Buddhism and Science: Breaking New Ground,* ed. B.A. Wallace.
BSMC	*Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts of the University Library, Cambridge,* Cecil Bendall.
BSOAS	*The Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies.*
BSPS	*Bulleh Shah,* J.R. Puri & T.R. Shangari.
BSS	*The Bústán,* Shaikh Musliḥu-d-Dín Saʾdí Shírází, tr. H. W. Clarke.
BSSB	*Bhīkhā Sāhib kī Shabdāvalī.*
BSSF	*The Book of the Seeker,* Shem Tob ben Joseph ibn Falaquera, tr. M. Herschel Levine.
BSSS	*Bullā Sāhib kā Shabd Sār.*
BSUS	*The Buddha Speaks the Ullambana Sutra,* tr. Buddhist Text Translation Society.
BTAD	*Basic Themes,* Ajaan Lee Dhammadharo, tr. Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.
BTB	*The Book of the Twelve Beguines,* Jan Van Ruysbroeck, tr. J. Francis.
BTCT	"Body temperature changes during the practice of g Tum-mo yoga," Herbert Benson *et al.*
BTCV	*The Bodhisaṃbhāra Treatise Commentary,* comm. Bhikshu Vaśitva, tr. Bhikshu Dharmamitra.

BTGG	*Blackfoot Lodge Tales,* George Bird Grinnell.
BTIT	*Buddhist Thought,* P. Williams with A. Tribe & A. Wynne.
BTNT	*The Buddha and His Teachings,* Venerable Nārada Mahāthera.
BWFP	*Buddhism of Wisdom & Faith,* Thích Thiền Tâm, tr. Sutra Translation Committee of the US and Canada.
BWIC	*Ibn 'Ata' Illah: The Book of Wisdom,* tr. V. Danner, and *Kwaja Abdullah Ansari: Intimate Conversations,* tr. W. Thackston.
BYAD	*Bhaktiyoga,* Aswini Kumar Datta, tr. Gunada Charan Sen.
C108	*108 Upanishads,* tr. various.
CA	*Confessions: Saint Augustine,* tr. R.S. Pine-Coffin.
CAFS	*Confessions of St Augustine,* tr. F.J. Sheed.
CAG	"Coptic Apocryphal Gospels," tr. F. Robinson.
CAGM	*Caves and the Ancient Greek Mind,* Yulia Ustinov.
CAM1–3	*Chidushei Aggadot l'Maharal mi'Prague*, 3 vols., Rabbi Yehudah Loew of Prague, arr. Harav Yosef Halevi Kehat.
CAPG	"Aristotle's Psychology," V. Caston.
CBBL	*The Complete Book of Buddha's Lists,* David N. Snyder.
CBD	*The Conference of the Birds,* Farid ud-Din Attar, tr. Afkham Darbandi & Dick Davis.
CBLL	*Consciousness Beyond Life,* Pim van Lommel.
CBSD	"Conversation between a *Starets* and a Disciple," in *La Prière de Jésus,* tr. Émile Simonod.
CBTW	*The Complete Book of Tai Chi Chuan,* Wong Kiew Kit.
CCED	*Cosmos and Community,* Livia Kohn.
CCEM	*Cosmic Consciousness,* R.M. Bucke.
CCEY	"Chod – Cutting through the Ego," Yangthang Rinpoche.
CCHT	*Contributions to the Cultural History of Early Tibet,* ed. Matthew T. Kapstein & Brandon Dotson.
CCKS	*Ch'an and Chih-kuan,* Paul L. Swanson.
CCME	*Commentaire sur la Paraphrase chrétienne du Manuel d'Épictète,* M. Spanneut.
CDB1–2	*Charaṇdās Jī kī Bānī,* 2 vols.; Belvedere.
CDBB	*The Connected Discourses of the Buddha,* 2 vols., tr. Bhikkhu Bodhi.
CDBZ	*A Concise Dictionary of Buddhism and Zen,* Ingrid Fischer-Schreiber, Franz-Karl Ehrhard, Michael S. Diener.
CDHR	*The Civilized Demons,* Malati J. Shendge.
CDNW	"Circumcision and the Divine Name," Elliot R. Wolfson.
CDP	*The Collected Dialogues of Plato,* ed. E. Hamilton & H. Cairns.
CDSV	*The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English,* Geza Vermes.
CEI	*The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam,* Cyril Glassé.
CELP	*Camino espiritual*, Luis de la Palma.
CERA	*The Catholic Encyclopedia,* 15 vols.

CFD	*Crying for A Dream,* Richard Erdoes.
CFGS	*Croaking Frogs,* Les Morgan.
CGAP	*St Augustine: Concerning the City of God against the Pagans,* tr. Henry Bettenson.
CGDO	*A Chanting Guide,* Dhammayut Order in the USA.
CGM	*The Call of the Great Master,* Daryai Lal Kapur.
CGT	*Càigēntán,* Hóng Zìchéng (Yīngmíng).
CH	*The Clementine Homilies,* tr. Thomas Smith *et al.*
CHA	*The Constitutions of the Holy Apostles,* Clement of Rome, tr. James Donaldson.
CHLD	*The Craft of the Heart,* Ajaan Lee Dhammadharo, tr. Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.
CIHL	*Communicating the Infinite,* Naftali Loewenthal.
CIMK	*Calm and Insight,* Bhikku Khantipalo.
CIT1–8	*Concordance et Indices de la Tradition Musulmane,* 8 vols., A.J. Wensinck *et al.*
CJTT	*Compendium of Jainism,* T.K. Tukol.
CMAK	*The Chasidic Masters and Their Teachings,* Aryeh Kaplan.
CMCB	*The Cologne Mani Codex,* tr. Ron Cameron & Arthur Dewely.
CMMS	*"Cotidie meditari,"* Robert Newman.
CMSA	*Classical Mediterranean Spirituality,* ed. A.H. Armstrong.
CMSS	*Concentration and Meditation,* Swami Sivananda.
CNEL	*Cultivating Body, Cultivating Self,* Michael Stanley-Baker.
COLA	"Counting the Omer," O.C. Levene & Rabbi Y. Hartman.
COT	*The Compass of Truth,* Muhammad Dara Shikoh, tr. S.R. Vasu.
CPAE	*Collected Poems by A.E.,* George William Russell.
CPAS	*Compendium of Philosophy,* tr. S.Z. Aung, ed. Mrs Rhys Davids.
CPJS	*Collected Papers on Jaina Studies,* Padmanabh S. Jain.
CPM	*The Canonical Prayerbook of the Mandaeans,* tr. E.S. Drower.
CPMS	*Cultivating Perfection,* Louis Komjathy.
CPS	*Commentaire sur les paradoxes des soufis (Sharh-e Shathîyât),* Ruzbehan Baqli Shirazi, ed. Henry Corbin.
CR	*The Clementine Recognitions,* tr. Thomas Smith.
CREB	*Concept and Reality in Early Buddhist Thought,* Ñāṇananda Bhikkhu.
CSA	*The Confessions of Saint Augustine,* tr. E.B. Pusey, ed. T. Smith.
CSCM	*Cāritrasāra,* Cāmuṇḍarāya.
CSK	*The Cell of Self-Knowledge,* ed. Edmund Gardner.
CSTM	*Cultivating Stillness,* tr. Eva Wong.
CSTP	*Cave in the Snow,* Vicki Mackenzie.
CTMP	*The Book of Chuang Tzu,* tr. Martin Palmer.
CTPQ	*Quan Tang Shi;* Chinese Text Project.
CTT	*Chuang Tzu,* tr. Herbert Giles.

CTTP	*Cultivating the Tao,* tr. Fabrizio Pregadio.
CTW	*The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu,* tr. Burton Watson.
CU	*The Cloud of Unknowing,* tr. William Johnston.
CUCW	*The Cloud of Unknowing,* tr. Clifton Wolters.
CUEU	*The Cloud of Unknowing,* tr. Evelyn Underhill.
CVAB	*The Call of the Vedas,* A.C. Bose.
CVCP	*Contemplation et vie contemplative selon Platon,* A.-J. Festugière.
CVTW	"Circumcision, Vision of God, and Textual Interpretation," Elliot R. Wolfson.
CW	*Angelus Silesius: The Cherubinic Wanderer,* tr. Maria Shrady.
CWA1–37	*The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo,* 37 vols.
CWJC	*The Collected Works of St John of the Cross,* tr. K. Kavanaugh & O. Rodriguez.
CWJC1–3	*The Complete Works of Saint John of the Cross,* 3 vols., tr. E.A. Peers.
CWLT	*The Complete Works of Lao Tzu,* tr. & elucidated Ni Hua-Ching.
CWSH	*The Collected Works of Shinran,* 2 vols., tr. Dennis Hirota *et al.*
CWSV1–9	*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda,* 9 vols.
CWT1–3	*The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila,* 3 vols., tr. Kieran Kavanaugh & Otilio Rodriquez.
CWTA1–3	*The Complete Works of Saint Teresa of Jesus,* 3 vols., tr. E.A. Peers.
DAA	*The Doctrine of Addai the Apostle,* tr. G. Phillips.
DAKU	*Dvādaśānuprekṣa,* Kārttikeya, ed. A.N. Upadye.
DASN	*Dīvān-i ʿAṭṭār,* incl. *Qaṣāʾid, Tarjīʿāt, va Ghazaliyāt,* ed. S. Nafīsī.
DBRD	*Dialogues of the Buddha,* Part I, tr. T.W. Rhys Davids.
DBSL	"Shekhinah," Colin Low.
DCBP	*The Dhammapada and Commentary,* tr. Nārada Thera, ed. Bhikkhu Pesala.
DCMU	*Dadu: The Compassionate Mystic,* K.N. Upadhyaya.
DCS	*Digital Corpus of Sanskrit,* Oliver Hellwig.
DCSB	*Dimensions of Classical Ṣūfī Thought,* R.S. Bhatnagar.
DDB1–2	*Dādū Dayāl kī Bānī,* 2 vols.
DDDA	*The Development and Distribution of Dejiao Associations in Malaysia and Singapore,* Chee Beng Tan.
DDPP	*Dialectic and Dialogue,* F.J. Gonzalez.
DECC	*Death with Equanimity,* Dalpat Singh Baya.
DEGL	*Discourses of Epictetus,* tr. George Long.
DF	*Divine Flashes,* F. ʿIraqi, tr. W.C. Chittick & P.L. Wilson.
DFQM	*Dīwān ibn al-Fāriḍ,* ʿUmar ibn ʿAlī Sharaf al-Dīn Abū al-Qāsim al-Miṣrī.
DG1–2	*Dariyā Granthāvalī,* 2 vols., D.B. Shāstrī.
DGS1–2	*Selections from Sri Dasam Granth Sahib,* 2 vols., tr. P.S. Sandhu.
DHA	*Dīvān-i Khwājah Ḥāfiẓ Shīrāzī,* ed. Abū al-Qāsim Anjavī Shīrāzī.

DHI	*Dīvān-i Hātif-i Iṣfahānī,* ed. Waḥīd Dastgirdī.
DHJL	*Dīwān des Abū'l-Ḥasan Jehuda ha-Levi,* 4 vols., ed. Ḥ. Brody.
DHK	*Daoism Handbook,* ed. Livia Kohn.
DHM	*Dīvān-i Ḥāfiẓ.*
DHWC	*The Dīvān-i-Ḥāfiẓ,* 2 vols., Khwāja Shamsu-d-Dīn Muḥammad-i-Ḥāfiẓ-i-Shīrāzī, tr. H. Wilberforce Clarke.
DIH	*Dīvān-i Ḥāfiẓ,* ed. Qāzi Sajjād Ḥusayn.
DIIM	*Dīvān-i Imāmī,* Imāmī of Harāt.
DISM	*The Dharma that Illuminates All Beings,* Kalu Rinpoche.
DJPS	*Davening,* Zalman Schachter-Shalomi.
DK1–3	*Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker,* 3 vols., H. Diels, ed. W. Kranz.
DKK	*Dīvān-i Kamāl al-Dīn Mas'ūd-i Khujandī,* ed. ʿAzīz Dawlatābādī.
DKND	"Different Kinds of Near-Death Experience," H. Knoblauch *et al.*
DKUC	*Discourses on Kaivalyopanisad,* tr. Swami Chinmayananda.
DL	*Divine Light,* Maharaj Charan Singh.
DLTM	*The Dalai Lamas on Tantra,* Glenn H. Mullin.
DMK	*Dīvān-i Mushtāqīyah,* Muẓaffar ʿAlī Shāh Kirmānī, ed. Javād Nūrbakhsh.
DMLW	*A Dictionary of the Maori Language*, Herbert Williams.
DMVZ	*Depositio Martyrum,* ed. R. Valentini & G. Zucchetti.
DMZM	*Dōgen's Manuals of Zen Meditation,* Carl Bielefeldt.
DNAJ	*Derasha,* Naḥmanides, ed. Adolf Jellenik.
DNAM	*Dictionary of Native American Mythology,* S.D. Gill & I.F. Sullivan.
DNB	*Dīvān-i Niyāz Barelvī,* Anwār al-Ḥasan.
DNK1–5	*Drops of Nectar,* 5 vols., tr. Andreas Kretschmar.
DNKR	*Dīvān-i Ash'ār-i Nāṣir-i Khusraw Qubādiyānī,* incl. *Rōshnā'i-Nāmah va Sa'ādat-Nāmah va Risālah-yi ba-Naśr,* ed. N.A. Taqvī.
DNMT	*Dionysius the Areopagite on the Divine Names and Mystical Theology,* tr. C.E. Rolt.
DNTB	*Digha Nikaya,* tr. Thanissaro Bhikkhu.
DNVE	*Dzogchen and the Nine Vehicles of Enlightenment According to the Nyingma Tradition,* David Boaz.
DNVS	*Digha Nikaya,* tr. Sister Vajira & Francis Story, ed. ATI.
DOI	*A Dictionary of Islam,* T.P. Hughes.
DOL	*The Dawn of Light,* Maharaj Sawan Singh.
DOSB	*The Darvishes or Oriental Spiritualism,* John Brown.
DP1–4	*The Dialogues of Plato,* 4 vols., tr. B. Jowett.
DPN	*The Dhammapada,* Narada Thera.
DPR	*The Dhammapada,* tr. S Radhakrishnan.
DR	*The Divine Romance,* John Davidson.
DRA	*Discourses of Rūmī,* tr. A.J. Arberry.

DS1–19	*Dàoshū shí'èr zhǒng,* 19 titles, Liú Yīmíng.
DSC	*Dariyā Sāhib (Bihārvāle) ke chune hue Shabd.*
DSD1–2	*Damascii successoris dubitationes et solutiones,* 2 vols., C.É. Ruelle.
DSGG	*The Dialogues of St Gregory the Great,* tr. H.J. Coleridge.
DSM	*Discourses on Sant Mat,* Hazur Maharaj Sawan Singh.
DSMM	*Dharma-saṅgraha,* ed. Max Müller, H. Wenzel & K. Kassawara.
DSMR	*Dīvān-i Kāmil-i Shams-i Maghribī,* Muḥammad Shīrīn Maghribī.
DSNS	*Dravya Sangraha,* Nemichandra Siddhantideva, tr. S.C. Ghoshal.
DSPB	*Dhammasaṅgaṇipāḷi.*
DSPS	*Discourse on the Sermon,* Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw.
DSPV	*Documentos saludables para las almas piadosas,* D.P. de Valdivia.
DSSK	*Dariya Sahib: Saint of Bihar,* K.N. Upadhyaya.
DSTR	*Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz,* Rūmī.
DSZ	*The Divine Songs of Zarathustra,* I.J.S. Taraporewala.
DTBP	*Debate in Tibetan Buddhism,* Daniel E. Perdue.
DTK	*The Daoist Tradition: An Introduction,* Louis Komjathy.
DTL	*Die to Live,* Maharaj Charan Singh.
DTPG	*Disputers of the Tao,* A.C. Graham.
DZ1–1487	*Dàozàng,* refers to the *Zhèngtǒng dàozàng,* 1487 titles in 60 vols.
DZZ1–2	*Dōgen zenji zenshū,* 2 vols., ed. Ōkubo Dōshū.
EB12	*Encyclopædia Britannica Ultimate Reference Suite.*
EBBC	"Eightfold Puja".
EBEP	*Eknāthānchi Bhajane,* Eknāth.
EBRB	*Encyclopedia of Buddhism,* 2 vols., ed. Robert Buswell.
ECMK	*Early Chinese Mysticism,* Livia Kohn.
ECMR	"La encarnación y la conceptión," León Cádogan.
ECMS	*On the Essence of Chassidus,* M. Schneerson, tr. R.Y.H. Greenberg & S.S. Handelman.
EDJS	*Ethical Doctrines in Jainism,* K.C. Sogani.
EDSB	*Early Daoist Scriptures,* Stephen Bokenkamp.
EDYF	*Encyclopedic Dictionary of Yoga,* Georg Feuerstein.
EEPR	*The Encyclopedia of Eastern Philosophy and Religion,* ed. Ingrid Fischer-Schreiber *et al.*
EETC	*Encheiridion of Epictetus and its Three Christian Adaptations,* G. Boter.
EFDA	*Experiences Facing Death,* Mary Austin.
EGPD	*Entrance to the Great Perfection,* Cortland Dahl.
EGPW	*Nāgārjuna on the Six Perfections,* Ārya Nāgārjuna, tr. Bhikshu Dharmamitra.
EHB	*The Essentials of Hinduism,* Swami Bhaskarananda.
EHS1–2	*The Essays and Hymns of Synesius of Cyrene,* 2 vols., tr. A. Fitzgerald.

EI1–12	*Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 12 vols., ed. H.A.R. Gibb *et al.*
EIL1–6	*Encyclopaedia of Indian Literature,* 6 vols., ed. A. Datta *et al.*
EIM	*Early Islamic Mysticism,* Michael Sells.
EIMP	*Essentials of Insight Meditation Practice,* Venerable Sujiva.
EKD	*The Early Kabbalah,* Joseph Dan & Ronald Kiener.
EKTG	*Ehyeh: A Kabbalah for Tomorrow,* Arthur Green.
ELTM	"Eternal Life in Taoist Mysticism," Livia Kohn.
EMAP	*Escala mística, y estímulo de amor divino,* Antonio Panes.
EMCC	*Expositio moralis et mystica in Canticum Canticorum,* 2 vols., Luis de la Puente.
EPHK	*The Eightfold Path for the Householder,* Jack Kornfield.
EPR1–2	*St Ephraim's Prose Refutations of Mani, Marcion and Bardaisan,* 2 vols., C.W. Mitchell, A.A. Bevan & F.C. Burkitt.
EREH	*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics,* 13 vols., James Hastings.
ERNG	*The Essential Rabbi Nachman,* tr. Avraham Greenbaum.
ERWT	*The Epicurus Reader,* D.S. Hutchinson.
ESED	*Eihei shingi,* Eihei Dōgen, tr. Soto Zen Text Project.
ESHS1–4	*Sancti Ephraemi Syri Hymni et Sermones,* 4 vols., T.J. Lamy.
ESRR	*Èrbǎi wǔshí suì rén ruìshí jì,* Yáng Sēn.
ET1–2	*The Encyclopedia of Taoism,* 2 vols., ed. Fabrizio Pregadio.
ETBH	*Everyday Tao,* Deng Ming-Dao.
ETBL	*Essential Themes of Buddhist Lectures,* Sayadaw U Thittila.
ETSM	*The Encyclopedia of Tibetan Symbols and Motifs,* Robert Beer.
ETTT	*Esoteric Teachings of the Tibetan Tantra,* tr. C.C. Chi.
EUSG1–2	*Eight Upaniṣads,* 2 vols., tr. Swāmī Gambhīrānanda.
EVP	*Essays into Vietnamese Pasts,* ed. K.W. Taylor & J.K. Whitmore.
EVT1–2	*The Elders' Verses: Theragāthā,* 2 vols., K.R. Norman.
EVTG	*Eagle Visions,* D.C. Irvington.
EVV1–3	*The Entrance to the Vinaya,* 3 vols., P. Vajiranyanavarorasa.
EVZK	*Entangling Vines,* tr. & ann. Thomas Yūhō Kirchner.
FBFL	*Fundamentals of Buddhism,* Nyanatiloka Mahathera.
FCWM	*Fools Crow: Wisdom and Power,* Thomas Mails.
FFF	*Fragments of a Faith Forgotten,* G.R.S. Mead.
FFNA	*Fawā'id al-Fu'ād,* Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyāʾ, Kvājah Amīr Ḥasan ʿAlā Sijzī & Khvājah Ḥasan Śānī Niẓāmī.
FGSM	*Crow Dog,* Leonard Crow Dog & Richards Erdoes.
FHAC	*Food for the Heart,* Ajahn Chah.
FHMB	*Fundamentals of Hawaiian Mysticism*, Charlotte Berney.
FHTS	*Fī Ḥālat al-Ṭufūlīyah,* Shihāb al-Dīn Suhravardī, ed. Ḥ. Mufīd.
FIAW	*Foundations of Internal Alchemy,* Wang Mu, tr. F. Pregadio.
FJF	*Fawā'iḥ al-Jamāl wa-Fawātiḥ al-Falāl,* Najm al-Dīn Kubrá, ed. Fritz Meir.

FKG	*The Feats of the Knowers of God,* Shams al-Dīn Aḥmad-e Aflākī, tr. John O'Kane.
FLI	*Farhang-i Lughāt va-Iṣṭilāḥāt va-Taʿbīrāt-i ʿIrfānī,* J. Sajjādī.
FLML	*The Fire of Love and The Mending of Life,* Richard Rolle, tr. Richard Misyn, ed. Frances Comper.
FLRR	*The Fire of Love,* Richard Rolle, tr. Clifton Wolters.
FLTM1–9	*Farhang-i Lughāt va-Taʿbīrāt-i Maśnavī,* 9 vols., Ṣ. Gawharīn.
FLVS	*First Lessons in Vedanta,* Swami Shivananda.
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FMIA1–9	*Futūḥāt al-Makkīyah,* 9 vols., Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-ʿArabī, ed. Aḥmad Shams al-Dīn.
FMPT	*The Fundamentals of Meditation Practice,* Ting Chen (Zhì Yǐ), tr. Dharma Master Lok To.
FNI1–15	*Farhang-i Nūrbakhsh: Iṣṭilāḥāt-i Taṣawwuf,* 15 vols., J. Nūrbakhsh.
FOSA	*The Flower Adornment Sutra Chapter 40,* tr. Mark Andrews.
FOSC	*The Flower Ornament Scripture,* tr. Thomas Cleary.
FRQJ	*Al-Fatḥ al-Rabbānī wa al-Fayḍ al-Raḥmānī,* Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir Jīlānī, ed. Shaykh Uns Mihrah.
FSC	*Four Sufi Classics,* tr. W.H.T. Gairdner & David Pendlebury.
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FSHM	*Pseudo-Macarius,* tr. George Maloney.
FSJJ	*First Step of Jainism,* Jaina Education Committee.
FSSA	"Why Fast?" Rabbi Shraga Simmons.
FSSN	*Four Sublime States,* Ven. Nyanaponika Thera.
FYL	*Fǎngdào yǔlù,* ed. Lǐ Lèqíu.
FZBW	*The Future of Zen Buddhism in the West,* Roshi Robert Aitken.
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GAPN	*Guide through the Abhidhamma Piṭaka,* Nyanatiloka Mahāthera.
GC	"Die Gedichte Cyrillonas," G.S. Bickell.
GCDP	*Great Clarity,* Fabrizio Pregadio.
GCI	*A Gallery of Chinese Immortals,* tr. Lionel Giles.
GCK	*Ghazālī's Book of Counsel for Kings,* tr. F.R.C. Bagley.
GDDS	*Gyān Dīpak,* Dariyā Sāhib.
GGD	*Gemstones of the Good Dhamma,* comp. & tr. S. Dhammika.
GGES	*The Gateless Gate,* tr. Eiichi Shimomissé.
GGG	*From Glory to Glory,* tr. H. Musurillo.
GHSZ	*Translation of Gathas,* Mobed Firouz Azargoshasb.
GHZI	*The Gathas: The Hymns of Zarathushtra,* tr. D.J. Irani.
GIP	*The Graces of Interior Prayer,* A. Poulain, tr. L.L.Y. Smith.
GJ	*The Gospel of Jesus,* John Davidson.
GJKN	*Gommatsara Jiva-Kanda,* Shri Nemichandra Siddhanta Chakravarti, ed. J.L. Jaini.
GKP	*Gāyathrī,* K. Padmanabhan.

GKTM	*The Gelug-Kagyu Tradition of Mahamudra,* The Dalai Lama & Alexander Berzin.
GKYB	*Gorakhnāth and the Kānphaṭa Yogīs,* G.W. Briggs.
GLBA	*Gifts He Left Behind,* comp. Phra Bodhinandamuni, tr. Thanissaro Bhikkhu.
GLMN	*Ghiyāth al-Lughāt,* Mawlānā Giyāś al-Dīn.
GLMT	*The Great Liberation,* tr. A. Avalon (John Woodroffe).
GLTS	*The Golden Letters,* tr. John Reynolds.
GMS	*Al-Ghazālī the Mystic,* Margaret Smith.
GNKT	*The Guide (Nettippakaraṇa),* Kaccāna Thera, tr. Ñāṇamoli.
GPM1–2	*The Guide of the Perplexed,* 2 vols., Moses Maimonides, tr. Shlomo Pines.
GPMM	*Guide for the Perplexed,* Moses Maimonides, tr. M. Friedlander.
GPMO	*St Grégoire Palamas et la mystique orthodoxe,* J. Meyendorff.
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GRPS	*Guru Ravidas: The Philosopher's Stone,* K.N. Upadhyaya.
GRS	*Maśnavī-i Gulshan-i Rāz,* Shaykh Maḥmūd Shabistarī, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Mullāyrī.
GRSS	*Gulshan-i Raz,* tr. E.H. Whinfield.
GRT1–3	*Genesis Rabbah,* 3 vols., ed. Chanoch Albeck & J. Theodor.
GS	*The Gnostic Scriptures,* Bentley Layton.
GSB	*Gulāl Sāhib kī Bānī;* Belvedere.
GSBM	*Ginzā der Schatz oder das Grosse Buch der Mandäer,* M. Lidzbarski.
GSR	*Gnosis on the Silk Road,* tr. H-J. Klimkeit.
GST	*Glossary of Sufi Technical Terms,* ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Qāshāni, tr. Nabil Safwat (English).
GSTA	*Glossary of Sufi Technical Terms,* ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Qāshānī, tr. Nabil Safwat (Arabic).
GSV	*Gheranda Samhita,* tr. Rai Bahadur Srisa Chandra Vasu.
GTBG	*God Talks with Arjuna,* Paramhansa Yogananda.
GTE1–3	*The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment,* 3 vols., Tsong-kha-pa, tr. Lamrim Chenmo Translation Committee.
GTR	*The Gnostics and Their Remains,* C.W. King.
GVM	*The Great Vohu Manah and the Apostle of God,* G. Widengren.
GWPT	*A Guide to the Words of My Perfect Teacher,* N. Pelzang.
HA	*Maśnavī Haft Awrang,* ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, ed. M.M. Gīlānī.
HAAI	*Al-Ḥikam al-ʿAṭā'iyah,* Ibn ʿAṭā' Illāh, comm. Ibn ʿAbbād al-Nafazī al-Turandī.
HAG	*Hermetica,* tr. Walter Scott.
HASS	*Hajj,* Ali Shariati, tr. Somayyah & Yaser.

HBCT	*The Heart of the Buddha,* Chögyam Trungpa.
HBSL	*Honen the Buddhist Saint,* Harper H. Coates & Ryugaku Ishizuka.
HCM1–2	*History of the Concept of Mind,* 2 vols., P.S. MacDonald.
HCML	*Shekel ha-Kodesh,* Moses de Leon.
HCW	*Hadewijch: The Complete Works,* tr. Columba Hart.
HDP1–9	*Handbooks for Daoist Practice,* 10 vols., tr. Louis Komjathy.
HDP3	*Yellow Thearch's Basic Questions,* tr. Louis Komjathy.
HDP8	*Redoubled Yang's Fifteen Discourses,* tr. Louis Komjathy.
HDPE	*Hawaiian Dictionary*, Mary Kawena Pukui & Samuel Elbert.
HEDA	*The Hymns and Homilies of Ephraim the Syrian and the Demonstrations of Aphrahat the Persian Sage,* tr. J. Gwynn.
HEMI	*Hasidism: Between Ecstasy and Magic,* Moshe Idel.
HGCH	*Hermetica,* tr. Brian Copenhaver.
HGZE	*Ḥemdah Genuzah,* Ẓevi Edelmann.
HHG	*The First Book of the Ḥadīqatu'l-Ḥaqīqat,* Ḥakīm Abū'l-Majd Majdūd Sanāʾī of Ghazna, tr. J. Stephenson (English).
HHGP	*The First Book of the Ḥadīqatu'l-Ḥaqīqat,* Ḥakīm Abū'l-Majd Majdūd Sanāʾī of Ghazna, ed. J. Stephenson (Persian).
HHS	*Ḥadīqat al-Ḥaqīqat wa Sharīʿat al-Ṭarīqat,* Abū al-Majd Majdūd Sanāʾī, ed. Mudarris Riżavī.
HHTD	*The Hidden History of the Tibetan Book of the Dead,* B. Cuevas.
HHTT	*Head & Heart Together,* Thanissaro Bhikkhu.
HIBL	*History of Indian Buddhism,* Étienne Lamotte, tr. S. Webb-Boin.
HIS	*Sharḥ-i Ḥikmat al-Ishrâq of Suhrawardî,* ʿAllâma Quṭb al-Dîn Maḥmūd Shîrâzî, ed. A. Nourani & M. Mohaghegh.
HJBB	*A Handbook of Jainology,* Acharyadeo Shri Bhuvanbhanijsoorishwarji, tr. K. Ramappa.
HJS1–2	*Hopi Journal of Alexander M. Stephen,* 2 vols., ed. E.C. Parsons.
HKUT	*Ḥikrei Kabbalah Ushluḥoteha,* Yeshayahu Tishbi.
HLLJ	*Holy Living: Saints and Saintliness in Judaism,* Louis Jacobs.
HLT	*The History and Life of the Reverend Doctor John Tauler of Strasbourg,* tr. Susanna Winkworth.
HM	*Ḥadīth Mālik Muwaṭṭa'.*
HMBB	*The Handbook for Mankind,* Bhikkhu Buddhadasa.
HMCA	*Hidden Meanings in Chinese Art,* Terese Tse Bartholomew.
HMCI	*History, Manners, and Customs of The Indian Nations,* John Heckewelder.
HMM1–4	*Al-Hadis,* 4 vols., al-Haj Maulana Fazlul Karim.
HMPP	"Hesuchia," A. Gocer.
HMV	*W.B. Henning Memorial Volume,* ed. M. Boyce & I. Gershevitch.
HNAA	*Ḥayyei ha-Nefesh,* Abraham Abulafia.
HNAC	"What Happened on the Ninth of Av"; chabad.org.
HNMG	*A Hawaiian Nation I,* Michael Kioni Dudley.

HNMJ	*The Holy Name: Mysticism in Judaism,* Miriam Bokser Caravella.
HOBA	*Ḥayyei ha-ʿOlam ha-Ba,* Abraham Abulafia.
HOCB	*Hoofprint of the Ox,* Master Sheng-yen with Dan Stevenson.
HPET	*In the Hope of Nibbana,* Winston L. King.
HPSD	*Hathapradipika of Svatmarama,* tr. Swami Digambarji & Pt. Radhunathashastri Kokaje.
HPW	*Heraclitus,* P. Wheelwright.
HQSA	*The Holy Qur'ān: English Translation of the Meaning and Commentary.*
HR2	"Handschriften-Reste in Estrangelo-Schrift aus Turfan, Chinesisch-Turkistan," F.W.K. Müller.
HRMC	*Hawaiian Religion & Magic*, Scott Cunningham.
HS	*The Hymn of the Soul,* tr. A.A. Bevan.
HSB	*Hadith Sahih al-Bukhari,* tr. Muhsin Khan.
HSCP	*A Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems,* tr. Arthur Waley.
HSD	*Ḥadīth Sunun Abū Dāwūd.*
HSDM	*The Hunger of the Soul: A Spiritual Diary,* Nancy Mayorga.
HSI1–2	*A History of Sufism in India,* 2 vols., Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi.
HSL1–2	*The Heritage of Sufism,* 2 vols., ed. Leonard Lewisohn.
HSM	*Hadith Sahih Muslim,* tr. Abdul Hamid Siddiqui.
HSNV	*Hōnen's Senchakushū,* tr. Senchakushū English Translation Project.
HSS	*Ḥālāt va Sukhanān-i Abū Saʿīd-i Abū al-Khayr,* ed. M.R.S. Kadkanī.
HSTM	*The Hymns of Śaṅkara,* T.M.P. Mahadevan.
HSYB	*Haṭhapradīpikā of Svātmārāma,* ed. M.L. Gharote & P. Devnath.
HTAE	*Hindu Tales,* H. Jacobi, tr. John Jacob Meyer.
HTKS	*Haṭhatatvakaumudī,* ed. M.L. Gharote.
HTZM	*Hua-t'ou: A Method of Zen Meditation,* Stuart Lachs.
HVP	*Commentary of Hierocles on the Golden Verses of Pythagoras,* A. Dacier, tr. N. Rowe.
HVSW	*Hugh of Saint Victor,* tr. Community of St. Mary the Virgin.
HWW1–2	*Hindu World,* 2 vols., Benjamin Walker.
HYKS	*Herigeru-kun to yumi,* Komachiya Sōzō.
HYP	*Hatha Yoga Pradipika,* tr. Pancham Sinh.
HYPM	*Hatha Yoga Pradipika,* Swami Muktibodhananda & Swami Satyananda Saraswati.
HZZS	*How Zen Became Zen,* Morten Schlütter.
IADS1–2	*Isaaci Antiochi, Doctoris Syrorum, Opera Omnia,* 2 vols., G.S. Bickell.
IBEH	*An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics,* Peter Harvey.
IBTS	*An Introduction to Buddhism,* Peter Harvey.

IC	*The Imitation of Christ,* Thomas à Kempis, tr. R. Whitford, ed. H. Gardiner.
ICCB	*Imitation of Christ,* Thomas à Kempis, tr. A. Croft & H. Bolton.
ICM	*Interior Castle or the Mansions,* St Teresa, tr. Benedictines of Stanbrook, ed. B. Zimmerman.
ICMS	*Iamblichus,* ed. N. Festa, corr. U. Klein.
ICSC	*Como interpretan los Chiripá la dansa ritual,* León Cádogan.
ICTK	*The Imitation of Christ,* Thomas à Kempis, tr. Leo Sherley Price.
ICW	*I Ching or Book of Changes,* tr. Cary F. Baynes.
ID	*Icanchu's Drum,* Lawrence Sullivan.
IDC	*Iḥyā'ʿUlūm al-Dīn,* Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī.
IDIB	*Introduction aux Doctrines ésotériques de l'Islam.*
IDL	*Introduction to the Devout Life,* St Francis de Sales, tr. M. Day.
IEP	*Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy,* ed. J. Fieser & B. Dowden.
IEVP	*Instrucción para enseñar la virtud a los pricipiantes,* D. Murillo.
IEZB	*The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Zen Buddhism,* Helen Baroni.
IINP	*Isaac Israeli,* tr. Alexander Altmann & Samuel Stern.
IJSJ	*An Introduction to Jaina Sadhana,* Sagarmal Jain.
IK	*Kitāb al-Insān al-Kāmil,* ʿAzīz al-Dīn Nasafī, ed. Marijan Molé.
IKJ	*Al-Insān al-Kāmil fī Maʿrifat al-Awākhir wa al-Awā'il,* Shaykh ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Jīlī, ed. ʿĀṣim Ibrāhīm al-Kayāli.
IKMH	*An Introduction to the Kabbalah,* Moshe Hallamish, tr. Ruth Bar-Ilan & Ora Wiskind-Elper.
ILP	*Iamblichus' Life of Pythagoras,* Thomas Taylor.
ILQO	*The Immortal,* Yang Sen, tr. Stuart Alve Olson.
ILSE	*Ignatius of Loyola,* ed. G.E. Ganss *et al.*
ILT	"Ignorance, Legend and Taijiquan," Stanley Henning.
IMNZ	*Te Ika a Maui,* Richard Taylor.
IMRR1–4	*Imam Gazzali's Iḥyā'ʿUlūm-ud-Dīn,* 4 books, tr. Fazal ul-Karim.
IMSR	*Islamic Mysticism: Sufism,* T.C. Rastogi.
IMVI	*Indian Mythology,* Veronica Ions.
IP1–2	*Indian Philosophy,* 2 vols., S. Radhakrishnan.
IPWL	*Iamblichus,* tr. J. Dillon & J. Hershbell.
IS	*Iṣṭilāḥāt-i Ṣūfīyah,* Farīd Aḥmad Ṣamdī.
ISMA	*Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Shaykh Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn ʿArabī,* ed. B.A.W. al-Jābī.
ISMM	*Itḥāf al-Sāda,* Muḥammad al-Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī.
ITSW	*Introduction to Tantra Śāstra,* John Woodroffe.
IUDG1–5	*Iḥyā'ʿUlūm al-Dīn,* 5 vols., Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, ed. ʿAllāmah Zīn al-Dīn Abī al-Faḍl al-ʿIrāqī.
IVRD	"Importance of the Vidhana Texts in Ritualistic Development," Pradnya Kulkarni.
JB	*The Jerusalem Bible.*

JCL	*Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures;* in *The CD-ROM Judaic Classics Library.*
JDEI	"Over 200 Jains embrace death every year".
JDH1	*Japan: A Documentary History,* vol. 1, David J. Lu.
JECM	*Joseph Estlin Carpenter: A Memorial Volume,* C.H. Herford.
JEDS	*Japanese-English Buddhist Dictionary,* Daito Shuppansha.
JE	*Jewish Encyclopedia.*
JEMS	*The Jade Emperor's Mind Seal Classic,* tr. Stuart Olson.
JFAH	"Some Judaeo-Arabic Fragments of Rabbi Abraham he-Ḥasīd, The Jewish Sufi," Paul Fenton.
JH1–108	*Dàozàng jīnghuá,* 108 titles.
JHL1–100	*Dàozàng jīnghuá lù,* 100 titles in 2 vols., comp. Dīng Fúbǎo.
JJPS	*Jap Ji: A Perspective,* T.R. Shangari.
JKLM	*Joseph Karo: Lawyer and Mystic,* R.J. Zwi Werblowsky.
JLP	*Journey to the Lord of Power,* Ibn al-ʿArabi, tr. R.T. Harris.
JMAK	*Jewish Meditation: A Practical Guide,* Aryeh Kaplan.
JMH1–3	*Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaghīr,* 3 vols., comp. Jalāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥman ibn Abī Bakr Suyūṭī, ed. Ḥasan Zarruq *et al.*
JMR	*The Koran,* tr. J.M. Rodwell.
JMT	*The Jewish Mystical Tradition,* Ben Zion Bokser.
JNOD	*Jerónimo Nadal: Obras y doctrinas espirituales,* Miguel Nicolau.
JOLG	*The Jewel Ornament of Liberation,* sGam.po.pa, tr. H. Guenther.
JOLK	*The Jewel Ornament of Liberation,* Gampopa, tr. Khenpo Konchog Gyaltsen Rinpoche.
JPMM	*Jaina Psychology,* Mohanlal Mehta.
JPP1–2	*Jain Philosophy and Practice,* 2 vols., comp. Jaina Education Committee.
JPPB	*Some Types of Jewish-Palestinian Piety from 70 B.C.E. to 70 C.E.,* Adolph Büchler.
JPPR	*Jaina Perspective in Philosophy and Religion,* Ramjee Singh.
JPRN	*Jaina Philosophy and Religion,* tr. Nagin J. Shah.
JPS1–2	*JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh,* 2 vols.; Jewish Publication Society.
JPSZ	*The Journal of the Polynesian Society;* University of Auckland.
JRAS	*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society;* Cambridge University Press.
JRMU	*Jaina-rūpa-maṇḍana,* Umakant Premanand Shah.
JS1–2	*Jewish Spirituality,* 2 vols., ed. Arthur Green.
JSB1–2	*Jagjīvan Sāhib kī Bānī,* 2 vols.; Belvedere.
JSBB1–7	*The Jātaka or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births,* 7 vols., ed. E.B. Cowells.
JSJW	"Jina Sutra"; jainworld.com.
JSMJ	*Jōdo Shinshū,* James C. Dobbins.
JTBM	*The Jhanas in Theravada Buddhist Meditation,* H. Gunaratana.
JTPB	*Jain Theory of Perception,* Pushpa Bothra.

JTPM *Jacopone da Todi, Poet and Mystic,* Evelyn Underhill.
JVLK *Jaina View of Life,* T.G. Kalghati.
JY1–315 *Dàozàng jíyāo,* 315 titles in 10 vols., ed. Chén Dàlì et al.
JYMS *Jaina Yoga,* R. Williams.
KA1–10 *Kashf al-Asrār va-ʿUddat al-Abrār,* 10 vols., Abū al-Faẓl Rashīd al-Dīn Maybudī, ed. ʿAlī Aṣghar Ḥikmat.
KADG *Kitāb al-Arbaʿīn fī Uṣūl al-Dīn,* Abī Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī.
KAG *Kitāb al-Arbaʿīn,* al-Ghazālī.
KAUD *Kitāb al-Arbaʿīn fī Uṣūl al-Dīn,* Abī Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, ed. ʿAbd Allāh ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd & Muḥammad Bashīr.
KB *The Jerusalem Bible,* English text rev. & ed. Harold Fisch.
KBG *Kun byed rgyal po'i mdo,* vol. 94 of the Ulan Bator (Mongolia) copy of the *Them spangs ma* manuscript canon.
KBMS *Keeping the Breath in Mind & Lessons in Samadhi,* Ajaan Lee Dhammadharo, tr. Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.
KBS *Kullīyāt-i Bulleh Shāh,* Faqīr Muḥammad.
KBSA *Kalām-i Bulleh Shāh,* ed. Naźīr Aḥmad.
KCFS *Kamma and Causality,* Francis Story.
KCN *Kahuna Class Notes*, David 'Daddy' Bray.
KDRM *Al-Kawākib al-Durrīyah fī Tarājim al-Sādah al-Ṣūfīyah,* ʿAbd al-Raʾūf al-Munāwī.
KDT1–2 *Al-Kawākib al-Durriyyah fī Tarājim al-Sādah al-Ṣūfiyyah,* 2 vols., Muḥammad ʿAbdul-Raʾūf al-Munāwi.
KFEY *Kashmir,* Francis Younghusband.
KFF *Kitāb Fīhi mā Fīhi,* Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, ed. B. Furūzānfar.
KG *Kabīr Granthāvalī,* ed. Shyām Sundardās.
KGGL *The King of Glorious Sutras,* tr. Losang Dawa.
KGME *Kabir: The Great Mystic,* I.A. Ezekiel.
KGS *Kabbalah,* Gershom Scholem.
KGSD *The Kiss of God,* Michael Fishbane.
KHDB *Kuntres ha-Hitpaʿalut,* Rabbi Dov Baer Schneerson.
KHI *Kullīyāt-i Shaykh Fakhr al-dīn Ibrāhīm Hamadānī ʿIrāqī,* ed. Saʿīd Nafīsī.
KHWA *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment,* Rudolf Steiner, tr. George Metaxa.
KI *The Koran Interpreted,* 2 vols., tr. A.J. Arberry.
KIF *Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn,* Muḥammad ʿAlī ibn ʿAlī al-Tahānavī, ed. Mawlavī Muḥammad Wajīh *et al.*
KIFT1–4 *Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn,* 4 vols., Muḥammad ʿAlī ibn ʿAlī al-Tahānawī, ed. Aḥmad Ḥasan Basaj.
KJV *The Bible: Authorized King James Version.*
KLT *Kitāb al-Lumaʿ fī al-Taṣawwuf,* Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj, ed. R.A. Nicholson (English).

KLTA	*Kitāb al-Lumaʿ fī al-Taṣawwuf,* Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj, ed. R.A. Nicholson (Arabic).
KM	*Kashf al-Mahjūb,* al-Hujwīrī, tr. R.A. Nicholson.
KMFK	*Kalimāt-i Maknūnah,* Fayż Kāshānī, ed. ʿAlī ʿAlīzādah.
KMM	*Kashf al-Maḥjūb,* Hujwīrī, ed. V.A. Zhukovsky.
KMPS	*Kundakunda: Mūlācāra,* Jaindās Phadakule Śāstri.
KNJI	*Khuddaka Nikaya,* tr. John Ireland.
KNLS	*Klee,* Norbert Lynton.
KNNR	*Khuddaka Nikaya,* tr. Narada Thera.
KNTB	*Khuddaka Nikaya,* tr. Thanissaro Bhikkhu.
KPA	*The Koran: With a Parallel Arabic Text,* tr. N.J. Dawood.
KPSL	*Ketem Paz,* Rabbi Simeon ibn Lavi.
KRN1–2	*Kitvei Ramban,* 2 vols., Moses ben Naḥman, ed. Ḥayyim Chavel.
KRPH	*The Kabbalah,* Adolph Franck, tr. I. Sussnitz.
KSA	*Akhrāvatī: Kabīr Sahab kā Pūrā Granth;* Belvedere.
KSB	*Kabīr Sāhib kā Bījak;* Belvedere.
KSBA	*Kullīyāt-i Shaykh Bahā'ī,* Bahāʾ al-Dīn Muḥammad ʿĀmilī, ed. Ghulām Ḥusayn Jawāhirī.
KSD1–10	*Kullīyāt-i Shams yā Dīvān-i Kabīr,* 10 vols., ed. B. Furūzānfar.
KSDS1–2	*Kullīyāt-i Shāh Dāʿī-i Shīrāzī,* 2 vols., ed. Maḥmūd Dabīr Siyāqī.
KSMF	*Kullīyāt-i Saʿdī,* Muṣliḥ al-Dīn Saʿdi, ed. M. Ali Foroughi.
KSMN	*Kullīyāt-i Ṣā'ib,* Ṣāʾib Tabrīzī.
KSS	*Kabīr Sākhī Sangrah;* Belvedere.
KSS1–4	*Kabīr Sāhib kī Shabdāvalī,* 4 vols.; Belvedere.
KSSS	*Kullīyāt-i Saʿdī,* Shaykh Muṣliḥ Dīn Saʿdī Shīrazī.
KST	*Kullīyāt-i Shams-i Tabrīz;* Munshi Naval Kishore.
KSTK	*Khulāṣah-'i Sharḥ-i Taʿarruf,* ed. Aḥmad ʿAlī Rajāʾī.
KSTY	*Keter Shem Tov ha-Shalem,* Baʿal Shem Tov, comp. Yaʿakov Yosef of Polnoye, ed. Aharon Hakohen of Apta.
KSUK	*Kali Saṅtaraṇa Upaniṣad (Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda),* tr. Anon.
KTAA	*Kulārṇava Tantra,* Arthur Avalon (John Woodroffe).
KTHB	*Kepelino's Traditions of Hawaii,* tr. Martha Beckwith.
KTJ	*Kitāb al-Taʿrīfāt,* al-Jurjānī, ed. ʿĀdil Anwar Khiḍr.
KTS	*Kitāb Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyya,* Sulamī, Johannes Pedersen.
KTZB	*The Kōan,* ed. Steven Heine & Dale S. Wright.
KVTD	*Kavitāvalī,* Tulsīdās.
KWGN	*Kabir: The Weaver of God's Name,* V.K. Sethi.
LA1–2	*Lawāqiḥ al-Anwār,* 2 vols., ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī.
LAD	*Letters of a Sufi Master,* tr. Titus Burckhart.
LAL	*Life After Life,* Raymond Moody.
LASZ	*Likkutei Amarim: Tanya,* Shneur Zalman of Liadi.
LATP1–2	*The Life of Apollonius of Tyana,* 2 vols., Philostratus, tr. F.C. Conybeare.

LBAP	*Leaving the Body,* D. Scott Rogo.
LBDF	*As Light Before Dawn,* Eitan Fishbane.
LBFD	*Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma,* tr. L. Hurvitz.
LDAC	*The Ladder of Divine Ascent,* John Klimakos, tr. Archimandrite Lazarus.
LDEY	*Lamdre: Dawn of Enlightenment,* Lama Choedak Yuthok.
LDST	*The Last Days of Socrates,* tr. H. Tredennick, rev. H. Tarrant.
LDSV	*Lame Deer,* John (Fire) Lame Deer & Richard Erdoes.
LDT	*Letters of Direction,* Abbé de Tourville, tr. Lucy Menzies.
LECP	*Lampara encendida,* Geronymo Gracian de la Madre de Dios.
LEUC	*Life of Evelyn Underhill,* Margaret Cropper.
LFRT	*Letters to a Friend,* Rabindranath Tagore, ed. C.F. Andrews.
LFYB	*Light and Fire of the Baal Shem Tov,* Yitzhak Buxbaum.
LGB	*The Book of Saint Bernard on the Love of God,* ed. E. Gardner.
LGFS	*The Love of God,* St Francis de Sales, tr. Vincent Kerns.
LGMD	*Laṭīfah-'i Ghaybī,* Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Dārābī.
LGSM	*Treatise on the Love of God,* St Francis de Sales, tr. H.B. Mackey.
LHHH	*Leaders of Hassidism,* S.A. Horodezky, tr. M. H.-Magasanik.
LHP1–2	"Palladius: The Lausiac History," 2 parts, Dom Cuthbert Butler.
LJLG	*Legends of the Jews,* 7 vols., Louis Ginzberg.
LJT	*Lǎojūn jièjīng,* tr. Silfong Tsun.
LKMS	*Loving-kindness Meditation,* Venerable Sujiva.
LMD	*Lughat-Nāmah,* 'Alī Akbar Dihkhudā.
LMDS	*The Laws of Manu,* Wendy Doniger with Brian Smith.
LML1–2	*Charles Kingsley,* 2 vols., Charles Kingsley & Frances Kingsley.
LMN1–15	*Likutey Moharan,* 15 vols., Rabbi Nachman of Breslov, tr. Moshe Mykoff, ann. Chaim Kramer.
LMTT	*The Life of Milarepa,* Lobsang P. Lhalungpa.
LOSM	*Light on Sant Mat,* Maharaj Charan Singh.
LPB1–4	*A Literary History of Persia,* 4 vols., Edward G. Browne.
LPD	*A Letter of Private Direction and Other Treatises,* tr. J. Griffiths.
LPH	*The Ladder of Perfection,* Walter Hilton, tr. Leo Sherley Price.
LPYB	*Light on Prāṇāyāma: The Yogic Art of Breathing,* B.K.S. Iyengar.
LSBN	*Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra,* ed. Bunyū Nanjō.
LSFA	*Likkutei Shikheḥah u-Fe´ah,* ed. Rabbi A. ben Y. Almalikh.
LSFY	*The Lives of Saints,* 2 vols., Pedro de Ribadeneira, tr. W. Petre.
LSJ	*Light on Saint John,* Maharaj Charan Singh.
LSMH	"Lower (Second?) Section of the Manichaean Hymns," tr. T. Chi.
LSMT	*The Lankavatara Sutra: A Mahayana Text,* tr. D.T. Suzuki.
LSN1–2	*The Lifestory of Naropa,* 2 parts, Khenpo Chodrak Rinpoche.
LSNT	*The Life of Sāriputta,* comp. & tr. Nyanaponika Thera.
LSOC	*The Lotus Sutra and Its Opening and Closing Sutras,* tr. B. Watson.
LSPS	*Lion of Siddhas,* tr. D. Molk & Lama Tsering Wangdu Rinpoche.

LSRF	*Lettera scritta ad un religioso,* Giovanni Falconi de Bustamante.
LSS	*The Life of the Servant,* Henry Suso, tr. James M. Clark.
LSTJ	*The Life of St Teresa of Jesus,* tr. D. Lewis, ed. B. Zimmerman.
LTAS	*Learning from the Tanya,* Adin Steinsaltz, ed. (Hebrew) Meir Hanegbi, tr. E Levine, T. Natkin & Y.D. Shulman.
LTAU	*Legendary Tales of the Australian Aborigines,* David Unaipon.
LTHB	*The Life and Teachings of Hillel,* Yitzhak Buxbaum.
LTII	*Left to Tell,* Immaculée Ilibagiza.
LTS	*Lawāʾiḥ,* Jāmī, tr. E.H. Whinfield & M.M. Ḳazvīnī (English).
LTSP	*Lawāʾiḥ,* Jāmī, tr. E.H. Whinfield & M.M. Ḳazvīnī (Persian).
LTTC	*Lao-tzu Te-tao ching,* tr. Robert G. Henricks.
LTTG	*Lieh-tzu: A Taoist Guide to Practical Living,* tr. Eva Wong.
LTTT	*Lao-tzu and the Tao-te-ching,* ed. L. Kohn & M. LaFargue.
LVSL	*Lalita-vistara,* ed. S. Lefmann.
LWK1–5	"The Lore of the Whare-kohanga," 5 parts, Elsdon Best.
LWML	*The Life and Works of Mencius,* James Legge.
LWW1–2	*Lore of the Whare-wānanga,* 2 parts, Te Matorohanga, tr. S.P. Smith.
LXX	*The Septuagint,* C3rd–2nd BCE (Greek).
LYDB	*Likkutim Yekarim,* Dov Baer the Maggid of Mezeritch, ed. Samuel ben Judah Leib Segal or Meshullam Feibush Heller.
MA	*The Master Answers,* Maharaj Charan Singh.
MAA	"The Mythological Acts of the Apostles," A.S. Lewis.
MAAG	*Mīzān al-ʿAmal,* al-Ghazālī.
MAG	*Mishkāt al-Anwār,* al-Ghazālī.
MALK	"Mirror of Auras: Chen Tuan on Physiognomy," Livia Kohn.
MARB	*Mashrab al-Arwāḥ,* Rūzbihān Baqlī, ed. ʿĀsim Ibrāhim al-Kayālī.
MASA1–2	*Manāqib al-ʿĀrifīn,* 2 vols., al-Aflākī al-ʿĀrifī, ed. Taḥsīn Yāzījī.
MBAK	*Meditation and the Bible,* Aryeh Kaplan.
MBB	*Ein Manichäisches Bet- und Beichtbuch,* W.B. Henning.
MBBB	*Mindfulness, Bliss, and Beyond,* Ajahn Brahm.
MBDF	*Mahāyāna Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations,* Paul Williams.
MBDP	*Mind Beyond Death,* Dzogchen Ponlop.
MBMR	*Mapping the Bodhicaryāvatāra,* Pabitrakumar Roy.
MBS	*Mīrābāī kī Shabdāvalī;* Belvedere.
MCDM	*Los mitos de creación y de destrucción del mundo,* Curt Nimuendajú, ed. Jürgen Riester.
MCT	*Miscellaneous Coptic Texts,* tr. E.A.W. Budge.
MD	*Mashāriq al-Darārī: Sharḥ-i Tāʿīyah ibn-i Fāriḍ,* Saʿīd al-Dīn Saʿīd al-Farghānī, ed. S.J. Āshtiyānī.
MDA	*Mohyī al-Dīn ibn ʿArabī,* Mohsen Jahangiri.
MDB	*Malūkdās Jī kī Bānī;* Belvedere.

MDBB	*Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha,* tr. Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, ed. & rev. Bhikkhu Bodhi.
MDI	*Mystical Dimensions of Islam,* Annemarie Schimmel.
MDLB	*Maggid Devarav Le-Yaʿakov,* Dov Baer of Mezhirech, ed. Rivka Schatz-Uffenheimer.
MDLS	*Mira: The Divine Lover,* V.K. Sethi.
MDTA	*My Dear Timothy,* Victor Gollancz.
MEAA	*The Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia,* Moshe Idel.
MEEP	*Meister Eckhart,* Franz Pfeiffer, tr. C. de B. Evans.
MEIA	*Meʾirat ʿEinayim,* Isaac ben Samuel of Akko.
MEM	"Mesopotamian Elements in Manichaeism," G. Widengren.
MERM	*Encyclopedia of Religion,* 15 vols., ed. Lindsay Jones.
MFC	*Mithras: The Fellow in the Cap,* E. Wynne-Tyson.
MFRH	*Memorials of Frances Ridley Havergal,* M.V.G. Havergal.
MGID	*The Myths and Gods of India,* Alain Daniélou.
MGK	*The Meaning of the Glorious Koran,* Marmaduke Pickthall.
MHCP	*The Manichaean Hymn-Cycles in Parthian,* tr. M. Boyce.
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MHJM	*The Mystic Heart of Judaism,* Miriam Bokser Caravella.
MHK	*Miṣbāḥ al-Hidāyah wa-Miftāḥ al-Kifāyah,* ʿIzz al-Dīn Maḥmūd Qāshānī, ed. Jalāl al-Dīn Humāʾī.
MHM	*Maṣāʾib-i Ḥallāj,* Louis Massignon, tr. Dhiyāʾ al-Dīn Dihshīrī.
MHMI	*Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael,* ed. H.S. Horovitz & I.A. Rabin.
MHN	*Morals for the Heart,* tr. Bruce Lawrence.
MHVA	*Mahāvastu-Avadāna,* based on *Le Mahâvastu,* 3 vols., ed. É. Senart.
MIG	*Miʿyār al-ʿIlm (Tarjamah),* al-Imām Ghazālī.
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QIAR	*Qānūn-i ʿIshq,* Anwar Alī Rohtakī.
QTDG	*Quán Tángwén,* ed. Dǒng Gào *et al.*
RAAA1–2	*Majmūʿah-'i Rasā'il-i Fārsī Khwājah ʿAbd Allāh Anṣārī,* 2 vols., ed. Muḥammad Sarūr Mawlāy.
RAH	*Refutation of All Heresies,* Hippolytus, tr. S.D.F. Salmond.
RAHK	*Rashaḥāt-i ʿAyn al-Ḥayāt*, Fakhr al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Ḥusayn-i Kāshifī.
RAIH	*The Religions of the American Indians,* Åke Hultkrantz, tr. Monica Setterwall.
RAQQ	*Risālah,* Abū al-Qasīm al-Qushayrī.
RBS1–2	*Plato: The Republic,* 2 vols., tr. P. Shorey.
RCE1–2	*Religious Celebrations,* 2 vols., ed. J. Gordon Melton.
RCML	*Śrī Rāmacaritamānasa,* Tulasīdāsa.

RD	*Ravidās Darshan,* ed. Achārya Prithvī Singh Āzād.
RDL	*Revelations of Divine Love,* Julian of Norwich, tr. C. Wolters.
RDMN	*Ramban on Deuteronomy,* Moses Naḥmanides.
RERR	*Radical Egalitarianism,* ed. F. Aulino, M. Goheen & S.J. Tambiah.
RGET	*The Roots of Good and Evil,* tr. Nyanaponika Thera.
RHND	*Risālah-'i Ḥaqq Numā,* Muḥammad Dārā Shikūh, ed. M.R. Jalālī.
RHRT	*Religions of the Hellenistic-Roman Age,* Antonia Tripolitis.
RHVM	*Reshit Ḥokhmah,* Elijah de Vidas (Muncacz, 1926).
RHVW	*Reshit Ḥokhmah,* Elijah de Vidas (Warsaw, 1875).
RI	*The Religion of Islām,* Maulānā Muḥammad ʿAlī.
RIS	*Rubaiyat-i-Sarmad,* tr. Faẓl Maḥmūd Asīrī (English).
RISP	*Rubaiyat-i-Sarmad,* tr. Faẓl Maḥmūd Asīrī (Persian).
RIWH	*Recorded Illuminates,* W. Winslow Hall.
RJA	*Rasā'il-i Jāmiʿ,* Khwājah ʿAbd Allāh Anṣārī, ed. Waḥīd Dastgirdī.
RJK	*Rawḍāt al-Jannāt,* Muḥammad Bāqir Khwānsārī.
RJKB	*Raidās Jī kī Bānī;* Belvedere.
RKSS	*Ratna-karaṇḍa-śrāvakācāra,* Samantabhadra.
RLRI	*Risālah-'i Lamʿāt va Risālah-'i Iṣṭilaḥāt,* ʿIrāqī, ed. J. Nūrbakhsh.
RM	*Rabiʿa the Mystic and her Fellow-Saints in Islam,* M. Smith.
RMDS	*Les Rêves et les moyens de les diriger,* D'Hervey de Saint-Denys.
RMI	*Readings from the Mystics of Islam,* M. Smith.
RMM	*The Revelations of Mechthild of Magdeburg,* tr. L. Menzies.
RMP	*A Reader in Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian,* M. Boyce.
RNNT	*Reading Neoplatonism,* Sara Rappe.
RNV1–4	*Rasā'il Shāh Niʿmatullāhī Valī,* 4 vols., ed. Javād Nūrbakhsh.
RPSJ	*Reality: Shri Pujyapada's Sarvarthasiddhi,* tr. S.A. Jain.
RQQQ	*Al-Risālah al-Qushayrīyah,* al-Qushayrī, ed. M. al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī.
RQR	*Risālat al-Quds wa Risālah Ghalaṭāt al-Sālikīn,* Rūzbihān Baqlī Shīrāzī, ed. Javād Nūrbakhsh.
RRC1–2	*Rituals of Rdo-rje-brag,* 2 vols., ed. Pema Choden.
RRS	*The Revival of Religious Sciences,* al-Ghazāli, tr. Bankey Behari.
RSB1–2	*Plato's Republic,* 2 vols., tr. Paul Shorey.
RSNO	*The Rules or Secrets of the Naqshbandi Order,* Omar Ali-Shah.
RSRP	"Redemption of the Soul in Golden Age Religious Poetry," Raymond P. Scheindlin.
RSSP	*Ratnakaraṇḍaka Śrāvakācāra,* Samantabhadra, ed. J.K. Kishor.
RSTS	*Ratna Sāgar,* Tulsī Sāhib; Belvedere.
RSV	*The Holy Bible: The Revised Standard Version.*
RTHM	*Rangitāne: A Tribal History,* J.M. McEwen.
RTLP	*The Record of Tung-shan, Liang-chieh,* tr. William F. Powell.
RUHR	*Rama Rahasya Upanishad,* tr. S. Hattangadi & P.R. Ramachander.
RVMD	*Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki,* M.N. Dutt.
RVMV	*The Ramayana of Valmiki,* Makhan Lal Sen.

S1–	Numbered manuscripts discovered at Dūnhuáng (China), now in the Stein Collection at The British Library, London (Chinese).
SAAD	*Śrāvakācāra,* Ācārya Amitagati, ed. Bhagchandra Jain.
SAAH	*Shaʿarei ha-ʿAvodah,* Aharon Halevi Horowitz of Staroselye.
SAC	"Shamanism Among the Avá-Chiripá," Miguel Bartolomé.
SADZ	*Staretz Amvrosy,* John Dunlop.
SAJA	*Sulam ha-ʿAliyah,* Joseph Albotini.
SAKH	*Sufi Aphorisms: Kitāb al-Ḥikam,* tr. Victor Danner.
SAMB	*The Sovereign All-Creating Mind,* tr. E.K. Neumaier-Dargyay.
SAPT	*Steps Along the Path,* Phra Ajaan Thate Desaransi, tr. Thanissaro Bhikkhu.
SAT	*The Signature of All Things and Other Writings,* Jacob Boehme.
SATM	*The Shape of Ancient Thought,* Thomas McEvilley.
SB1–18	*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam of Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana Vyāsa,* 18 vols., A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.
SBAK	*The Bahir: Illumination,* tr. Aryeh Kaplan.
SBAT	*Sar Bachan: An Abstract of the Teachings of Soami Ji Maharaj.*
SBAZ	*Sermons of a Buddhist Abbot,* Soyen Shaku, tr. D.T. Suzuki.
SBB	*Sahajobāī kī Bānī;* Belvedere.
SBCP	*A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy,* tr. Wing-tsit Chan.
SBE	*Sultan Bahu,* J.R. Puri & K.S. Khak.
SBE2	*The Sacred Laws of the Âryas,* Part I: *Âpastamba and Gautama,* tr. Georg Bühler.
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SBE33	*The Minor Law Books,* tr. Julius Jolly.
SBE35–36	*The Questions of King Milinda,* 2 vols., tr. T.W. Rhys Davids.
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SBE45	*Jaina Sutras,* Part II, tr. Hermann Jacobi.
SBE5	*Pahlavi Texts,* Part I, *The Bundahis, Bahman Yast, and Shâyast Lâ-Shâyast,* tr. E.W. West.
SBHB	*Sant Bānī,* Hem Chandra Bhargava.
SBJP	*A Source Book in Jaina Philosophy,* D.M. Shastra, tr. T.G. Kalghati.
SBJT	*The Schocken Book of Jewish Mystical Testimonies,* Louis Jacobs.
SBNN	*Sūn Bù'èr nǚgōng nèidān cìdìshī zhù,* Chén Yīngníng.
SBP	*Sār Bachan Chhand-Band (Sār Bachan Poetry),* Swāmī Shiv Dayāl Singh.
SBPS	*Sar Bachan Poetry (Selections),* Soami Shiv Dayal Singh.
SBRS	*Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu-bindu,* Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, tr. Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja.
SBS1–4	*Sudharma Svāmī's Bhagavatī Sūtra,* 2 vols., K.C. Lalwani.
SBSU	*Sā'īn Bulleh Shāh.*

SBU	*Ḥażrat Sulṭān Bāhū.*
SBWG	*Srimad Bhagavatam,* tr. Swami Prabhavananda.
SCJS	*Sīmǎ Chéngzhēn jíjíjiào,* Wú Shòujū.
SCM1–2	"Spiritual Concepts of the Maori," 2 parts, Elsdon Best.
SCML	*The Secrets of Chinese Meditation,* Lu K'uan Yu (Charles Luk).
SCVJ	*Śrāvakācāra,* Vasunandin, ed. Hiralal Jain.
SD1–2	*Spiritual Discourses,* 2 vols., Maharaj Charan Singh.
SDAM	*Sāgāra-dharmāmṛta,* Āśādhara.
SDBS	"Shekhinah," digital-brilliance.com/themes/shekhinah.php.
SDEM	*Sefer Derekh Emunah,* Meir ibn Gabbai.
SDFE	"A Study of Dreams," Frederik van Eeden.
SDKD	*Śrāddha-dina-kṛtya,* Devendra.
SDLF	*Sifre on Deuteronomy,* tr. Louis Finkelstein.
SDSL	*Sky Dancer,* K. Dowman.
SDST	*Selected Poems from the Dīvāni Shamsi Tabrīz,* tr. R.A. Nicholson.
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SEP1–3	*Moral Epistles,* 3 vols., Seneca, tr. R.M. Gummere.
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SFAH	*Sayrat-i Fakhr al-ʿĀrifīn,* comp. Sikander Shah.
SFH	*Sharḥ-i Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam,* Dāʾūd al-Qayṣarī.
SFSJ	*Structure and Functions of Soul in Jainism,* S.C. Jain.
SG	*Spiritual Gems,* Maharaj Sawan Singh Ji.
SGEP	*Seeing God Everywhere,* Swami Shraddhananda.
SGFC	*The Secret of the Golden Flower,* tr. Thomas Cleary.
SGFO	*Secret of the Golden Flower,* tr. Stuart A. Olsen.
SGFW	*The Secret of the Golden Flower,* tr. & expl. R. Wilhelm.
SGPT	*The Scripture on Great Peace,* Barbara Hendrischke.
SGR	*Mafātiḥ al-Iʿjāz fī Sharḥ-i Gulshan-i Rāz-i Maḥmūd Shabistarī,* Shaykh Muḥammad Lāhījī, ed. Kayvān Samīʿī.
SGRV	*Sant Guru Ravidās Vāṇī,* ed. B.P. Sharmā.
SHEA	*Sefer Ḥaredim,* Rabbi Eleazar Azikri.
SHI	*The Spiritual Heritage of India,* Swami Prabhavananda.
SHLS	*Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur,* P. Schäfer, M. Schlüter & H.G. von Mutius.
SHME	*Fifty Spiritual Homilies of St. Macarius,* tr. A.J. Mason.
SHMG	*Die 50 Geistlichen Homilien des Makarios,* ed. Dörries, Klostermann & Kroeger.

SHRJ *The Story of My Heart,* Richard Jefferies.
SICE *The Soul of the Indian,* Charles Alexander Eastman (Ohiyesa).
SIM *Studies in Islamic Mysticism,* R.A. Nicholson.
SJCC *Sravakacara,* B.K. Khadabadi.
SJJT *Sìshíjiǔ zhāng jīng,* tr. Silfong Tsun.
SJMD "Studies in Jewish Mysticism," ed. Joseph Dan & Frank Talmage.
SKDC *Dion Chrysostomos oder Vom Leben nach seinem Vorbild,* Synesios von Kyrene, tr. Kurt Treu.
SKHV *Shaʿarei Kedushah,* Ḥayyim Vital; British Museum Ms. 749.
SKHZ *Shaʿarei Kedushah,* Ḥayyim Vital; dailyzohar.com.
SKJH *Sefer ha-Kuzari le-Rabi Yehudah Halevi,* Yehuda Even-Shemuel.
SKN *Sufi: A Journal of Sufism;* Khaniqahi Nimatullahi Publications.
SKQ *Sharḥ-ī Aḥvāl va-Āthār va-Dubaytihā-yi Bābā Ṭāhir ʿUriyān,* ʿAyn al-Quḍāt Hamadānī, ed. Javād Maqsūd.
SKS *Self-Knowledge (Atmabodha),* tr. Swami Nikhilananda.
SKSM *Satt Kabīr kī Shabdāvalī,* ed. Shri Manilal Tulsidas Mehta.
SL *Spiritual Letters,* Baba Jaimal Singh Ji.
SLAI *The Spiritual Legacy of the American Indian,* Joseph Epes Brown.
SLSS *Studies in the Lankavatara Sutra,* D.T. Suzuki.
SMA *Ṣad Maydān,* Khwājah ʿAbd Allāh Anṣārī, ed. Qāsim Anṣārī.
SMAS *The Sayings of Muhammad*, comp. Abdullah Suhrawardy.
SMHV *Shaʿar ha-Miẓvot,* Ḥayyim Vital, ed. Yehuda Ashlag.
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SMPB "'Signless' Meditations in Pāli Buddhism," Peter Harvey.
SMSL *Subida del Monte Sión,* Fray Bernardino de Laredo.
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SMWE *The Shaman and the Medicine Wheel*, Evelyn Eaton.
SNG *Shrī Nāmdev Gāthā.*
SNMW *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, tr. Maurice Walshe.
SNPM *Secret Native American Pathways* Thomas Mails.
SNTB *Samyutta Nikaya,* tr. Thanissaro Bhikkhu.
SNVF *The Sutta-Nipâta: A Collection of Discourses,* tr. V. Fausböll.
SOA *Sufis of Andalusia,* tr. R.W.J. Austin.
SOB *The Spread of Buddhism,* ed. A. Heirman & S.P. Bumbacher.
SOHI *Sefer Oẓar Ḥayyim,* Isaac ben Samuel of Akko.
SOL *Sayings of Our Lord,* B.P. Grenfell & A.S. Hunt.
SOMM *Sefer Oẓar Ma´amarim u-Mikhtavim,* Judah Aryeh Leib Alter.
SOSJ *The Science of the Soul,* Sardar Bahadur Maharaj Jagat Singh.
SOU *Signs of The Unseen,* tr. W.M. Thackston Jr.

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SPAW	*Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.*
SPDS	*The Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra,* tr. Buddhist Text Translation Society.
SPID	*Spiritual Progress or Instructions in the Divine Life of the Soul,* François Fénelon, Madame Guyon & Père Lacombe, ed. J. Metcalf.
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SRKV	*Shaʿar Ruaḥ ha-Kodesh,* Ḥayyim Vital, ed. Yehuda Ashlag.
SRMG	*Scriptores Rerum Mirabilium Graeci,* ed. Antonius Westermann.
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SUPP	*Śramaṇopāsaka-pratimā-pañcāśaka,* Haribhadra.
SVR1–2	*Srīmad Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa,* 2 vols.; Gita Press.
SVRS	*Śrāddha-vidhi,* Ratnaśekhara.
SVSL	*ʿUmar ibn al-Fâriḍ,* tr. Th. Emil Homerin.
SVUW	*The Saṃanya Vedanta Upaniṣad-s,* tr. A.G. Krishna Warrier.
SVWR	*Secret of the Vajra World,* Reginald A. Ray.
SWLL	*The Sūtra of Wei Lang,* tr. Wong Mou-Lam, ed. C. Humphreys.
SWNY	*Selected Writings of Nichiren,* ed. Philip B. Yampolsky.

SWP	*Select Works of Plotinus,* tr. Thomas Taylor.
SWT	*A Study of Wisdom,* tr. Clifton Wolters.
SWWL	*Selected Mystical Writings of William Law,* ed. S. Hobhouse.
SYAK	*Sefer Yetzirah,* tr. Aryeh Kaplan.
SYEA	*Shaʿarei ha-Yiḥud ve-ha-Emunah,* Aharon Halevi Horowitz of Staroselye.
SYNR	"Six Yogas of Naropa," Ringu Tulku.
SYYP	*The Science of Yoga,* I.K. Taimni.
SZGS	*Shaʿarei Ẓedek,* ed. Gershom Scholem.
T1–100	*Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō,* 100 vols., ed. Takakusu Junjirō & Watanabe Kaigokyu.
TACD	*The Teachings of Ajahn Chah,* Ajahn Chah.
TAN1–2	*Tadhkiratu 'l-Awliya,* 2 parts, ed. R.A. Nicholson.
TAT	*Taṣawwuf va-Adabīyāt-i Taṣawwuf*, Y.E. Bertels, tr. Sirus Izadi.
TBDG	*The Tibetan Book of the Dead,* Padmasambhava & Terton Karma Lingpa, tr. Gyurme Dorje.
TBDR	*The Tibetan Book of the Dead,* Padma Sambhava, discovered by Karma Lingpa, tr. Robert A.F. Thurman.
TBDT	*The Tibetan Book of the Dead,* Guru Rinpoche, according to Karma Lingpa, tr. F. Fremantle & Chögyam Trungpa.
TBDW	*The Tibetan Book of the Dead,* tr. Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup, ed. W.Y. Evans-Wentz.
TBEE	*Tanna Debe Eliyyahu,* tr. William Braude & Israel Kapstein.
TBKS	*The Taoist Body,* Kristofer Schipper, tr. Karen C. Duval.
TBLD	*The Long Discourses of the Buddha,* tr. Maurice Walshe.
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TBST	*Tzava´at Harivash,* tr. Jacob Schochet.
TBSZ	*The Tanya,* Shneur Zalman, tr. Nissan Mindel *et al.*
TBT	*Taḥrīr al-Bayān fi Taqrīr Shuʿab al-Īmān,* al-Qūnawī.
TBTL	*Original Teachings of Ch'an Buddhism,* tr. Chang Chung-Yuan.
TBZB	*The Talmud: Selected Writings,* Ben Zion Bokser.
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TCBB	*Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha,* ed. E.A. Burtt.
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TCDO	"Traditional Native Concepts of Death," Ojibwa.
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TDKD	*Treasure of the Dhamma,* K. Sri Dhammananda.
TDMC	*Tomer Devorah,* Moses Cordovero.
TEAK	*The Taoist Experience: An Anthology,* Livia Kohn.

TG	*Theologia Germanica,* tr. Susanna Winkworth.
TGAS	*Taʿlīm-i Ghawśīah,* Sayyid Shāh Gul Ḥasan Qalandar Qādirī.
TGH1–3	*Thrice-Greatest Hermes,* 3 vols., G.R.S. Mead.
TGLE	*Tao, The Great Luminant,* tr. Evan Morgan.
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TITG	"Tantric Geometry," Devdutt Pattanaik.
TIVU	*The Taoist Inner View of the Universe and the Immortal Realm,* Ni Hua-Ching.
TJWM	*Tàipíng jīng hé xiào yībǎi qīshí juàn,* 2 vols., ed. Wáng Míng.
TK1–10	*The Treasury of Knowledge,* 10 vols., Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé, tr. Kalu Rinpoché Translation Group.
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TKSQ	*Tuhfat al-Kirām,* Mīr ʿAlī Shīr Qāniʿ.
TLDS	*The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying,* Sogyal Rinpoche.
TLG	*Thesaurus Lingae Graecae: A Digital Library of Greek Literature.*
TLJW	"Tefillin (Phylacteries)," Louis Jacobs.
TLM1–2	*Thesaurus sive Liber Magnus, vulgo "Liber Adami" appelatus, opus Mandaeorum summi ponderis,* 2 vols., ed. J.H. Petermann.
TLSS	*Soeur Thérèse of Lisieux, the Little Flower of Jesus,* Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, tr. T.N. Taylor.
TMED	*Taoist Meditation,* tr. Thomas Cleary.
TMG	"The Tohunga Maori," Walter Gudgeon.
TMHW	*Tanya, the Masterpiece of Hasidic Wisdom,* tr. Rabbi R. Shapiro.
TMLT	*Taoist Meditation and Longevity Techniques,* ed. Livia Kohn.
TMMS	*Taoist Meditation,* Isabelle Robinet, tr. J.F. Pas & N.J. Girardot.
TMNM	*Al-Tibr al-Masbūk fī Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk,* Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī.
TMPS	*Taoist Mystical Philosophy,* Livia Kohn.
TMS	"Tapu," Michael Shirres.
TMSC	*A Treasury of Mahāyāna Sūtras,* ed. G.C.C. Chang.
TMT1–16	*A Treasury of Mystic Terms,* Parts I–III, 16 vols., ed. J. Davidson.
TMTN	*Tilopa's Mahamudra Instruction to Naropa in Twenty Eight Verses,* tr. Kunzang Tenzin.
TMU	*Thirty Minor Upaniṣads,* tr. K. Narayanasvami Aiyar.
TOH1–4567	*A Complete Catalogue of the Tibetan Buddhist Canons,* ed. Hakuju Ui *et al.*
TOP	*The Treatise of the Pool: Al-Maqala al-Ḥawḍiyya,* ʿObadyah Maimonides, tr. Paul Fenton.
TOS	*Tayyibat,* tr. Lucas White King.
TOSZ	*Torah Or,* Shneur Zalman of Lyady.
TPA1–2	*Traditions of the Prophet (Ahadith*), 2 vols. Javad Nurbakhsh, tr. L. Lewisohn & T. Graham.

TPBW *Therigatha,* tr. Charles Hallisey.
TPCS *The Path,* Maharaj Charan Singh.
TPEF *Tantra: The Path of Ecstasy,* Georg Feuerstein.
TPEQ *The Teachings and Practices of the Early Quanzhen Taoist Masters,* Stephen Eskildsen.
TPRS *The Thirteen-Petalled Rose,* Adin Steinsaltz, tr. Yehuda Hanegbi.
TPSN *The Three Pure Land Sutras,* tr. H. Inagaki with H. Stewart.
TPU *Thirteen Principal Upanishads,* tr. R.E. Hume.
TPZK *The Three Pillars of Zen,* comp. & ed. Philip Kapleau.
TQH *Tamhīdāt,* ʿAyn al-Quḍat Hamadānī, ed. ʿAfīf ʿUsayrān.
TRAK *Tohunga – The Revival,* Samuel Timoti Robinson.
TRTI *Tzava´at harivash,* tr. Jacob Immanuel Schochet.
TRVY *Tsava´at harivash vehanhagot yesharot,* found among the papers of Isaiah, Rabbi of Janov.
TRW *Tending the Roots of Wisdom,* comp. Hong Yingming, tr. Paul White & Frank Jiang.
TS *The Teachings of Silvanus,* J. Zandee.
TSAA *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah,* Khwājah ʿAbd Allāh Anṣārī, ed. A.H. Ḥabībī.
TSAO *Francisco de Osuna,* tr. Mary E. Giles.
TSCS *Tattvārtha Sūtra with commentary of Siddhasena.*
TSH1–2 *Tulsī Sāhib Hāthrasvale kī Shabdāvalī,* 2 vols.; Belvedere.
TSMD *Tattvärtha Sutra,* tr. Manu Doshi.
TSNI *Theurgy and the Soul,* Gregory Shaw.
TSP1–6 *Triṣaṣṭiśalākāpuruṣacaritra,* 6 vols., Hemacandra, tr. H. Johnson.
TSR *The Triumphal Sun,* Annemarie Schimmel.
TSSH *Tulsi Sahib: Saint of Hathras,* J.R. Puri & V.K. Sethi.
TSSP *Tattvārtha-Sūtra with Sarvārtha-siddhi of Pūjyapāda,* Umāsvāmī.
TSSW *Through a Speculum That Shines,* Elliot R. Wolfson.
TSUS *Tatvarth Sutra,* tr. Upadhaya Shritsagar.
TT1–2 *The Texts of Taoism,* 2 vols., tr. James Legge.
TTAA *Al-Takkashuf al-Taṣavvuf,* Mawlānā Ashraf ʿAlī.
TTCC *The Tao Te Ching,* tr. Ellen M. Chen.
TTCE *Tao Te Ching,* Lao Tsu, tr. Gia-fu Feng & Jane English.
TTCL *Lao Tzu: Tao Te Ching,* tr. D.C. Lau.
TTCS *Tao Te Ching,* tr. Jonathan Star.
TTCT *Tao Te Ching: A New Translation,* tr. Ch'u Ta-Kao.
TTCW *Tao Te Ching,* Lao Tzu, tr. John C.H. Wu.
TTEP *Taoist Texts,* tr. Frederic Balfour.
TTK *Al-Taʿarruf li-Madhhab Ahl al-Taṣawwuf,* Abū Bakr Muḥammad Kalābādhī, tr. Abū Ibrāhīm Mustamalī Bukhārī.
TTQ *The Thousand and Twelve Questions,* E.S. Drower.
TTRP *Lao-tzu's Taoteching,* tr. Red Pine.

TTS	*The Tibetan Tripitaka,* 168 vols., Peking edn., ed. D.T. Suzuki.
TTSP	*Tertullian: On the Testimony of the Soul and On the 'Prescription' of Heretics,* tr. T.H. Bindley.
TTT1–10	"Türkische Turfantexte," 10 parts, W. Bang, A. von Gabain, T. Kowalski, G.R. Rachmati, W. Winter *et al.*
TTTP	*Three Teachings: Talks,* Tenzin Palmo.
TTTT	*Tikao Talks,* Herries Beattie.
TTW	*Teachings of the Tao,* tr. Eva Wong.
TTWC	*The Way of Lao Tzu (Tao-te ching),* tr. Wing-tsit Chan.
TTWP	*A Treasury of Traditional Wisdom,* Whithall N. Perry.
TUSS	*Taittirīyopaniṣad,* tr. Swāmī Sarvānanda.
TVR	*Tukārām Vāchanāmṛit,* R.D. Ranade.
TVW1–5	*The Treatise on the Great Virtue of Wisdom of Nāgārjuna,* 5 vols., tr. Étienne Lamotte & Gelongma Karma Migme Chödrön.
TVWC	*Two Visions of the Way,* Alan K.L. Chan.
TYAI	*Taoist Yoga,* tr. Lu K'uan Yu (Charles Luk).
TYPY	*The Textbook of Yoga Psychology,* Rammurti Mishra.
TYSJ	*Táo Yuānmíng shī jiānzhù,* ed. Dīng Fúbǎo.
TYVL	*A Translation of Yoga-Vâsishta,* tr. K. Nārāyaṇaswāmi Aiyer.
TYYY	*Toldot Ya'akov Yosef,* Ya'akov Yosef of Polnoy.
TZC	*Two Zen Classics,* tr. K. Sekida, ed. A.V. Grimstone.
U1–4	*The Upanishads,* 4 vols., tr. Swami Nikhilananda.
UCRM	*Religio Medici,* Thomas Browne.
UGAG	*The Unvarnished Gospels,* tr. Andy Gaus.
UHEH	*Uniter of Heaven and Earth,* Miles Krassen.
UISS	*The Undistorted Image,* Archimandrite Sophrony.
UJM1–2	*Understanding Jewish Mysticism*, 2 vols., ed. David Blumenthal.
UMDC	*The Union of Mahamudra and Dzogchen,* Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche & Karma Chagmey Rinpoche, tr. Erik Pema Kunsang.
UMMB	*Unravelling the Mysteries of Mind & Body,* Sayalay Susīlā.
USJM	"The Uplifting of Sparks in Later Jewish Mysticism," L. Jacobs.
UVPP	*Ācārya Umāsvāti Vācaka's Praśamaratiprakaraṇa,* tr. Y.S. Shastri.
VCRD	*Vibhaṅga,* ed. C.A.F. Rhys Davids.
VCSM	*Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya,* tr. Swāmī Mādhavānanda.
VCST	*Vivekacūḍāmaṇi of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya,* tr. Svāmī Turīyānanda.
VDCH	*Vandanā,* Elgiriye Indaratana Maha Thera.
VE	*The Vedic Experience,* Raimundo Panikkar.
VFWW	*Vedanta for the Western World,* ed. Christopher Isherwood.
VIAF	*The Book of Visions and Instructions of Blessed Angela of Foligno,* tr. A.P.J. Cruikshank.
VME1–2	*Vida (Life) and Other Works,* 2 vols., Marina de Escobar.

VMTP	*La Vie de Moïse ou Traité de la perfection en matière de vertu,* Grégoire de Nysse, tr. J. Daniélou.
VPW	*The Vishṇu Purāṇa,* tr. H.H. Wilson, ed. F. Hall.
VREJ	*The Varieties of Religious Experience,* William James.
VSSG	*The Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi Sutra,* tr. Rolf Giebel.
VSY	*Vedāntasāra of Sadānanda Yogindra,* tr. Swami Nikhilananda.
VTP1–2	*Vinaya Texts,* Parts I & II, tr. T.W. Rhys Davids & H. Oldenberg.
VUAR	*Vaiṣṇava Upanisad-s,* tr. A.A. Ramanathan.
VVBA	*Vida del V.P. Baltasar Álvarez,* Luis de la Puente.
VYAA	*Ve-zot le-Yehudah,* Abraham Abulafia.
VYV	*Vasiṣṭha's Yoga,* tr. Swami Venkatesananda.
WAPH	*What is Ancient Philosophy?* Pierre Hadot, tr. Michael Chase.
WBC1–4	*The Works of Bernard of Clairvaux: On the Song of Songs,* 4 vols., tr. K. Walsh (vols. 1–3) & I.M. Edmonds (vols. 3–4).
WBOB	*The Word of the Buddha,* tr. & expl. Nyanatiloka Mahāthera.
WCA1–2	*The Writings of Clement of Alexandria,* 2 vols., tr. W. Wilson.
WCI	*The Wisdom of China and India,* ed. Lin Yutang.
WCPK	*The Way of Complete Perfection,* Louis Komjathy.
WCTM	*The Way of Chuang Tzu,* tr. Thomas Merton.
WDA1–2	*The Works of Dionysius the Areopagite,* 2 vols., tr. John Parker.
WDF	*The Wisdom of the Desert Fathers,* tr. Benedicta Ward.
WDGB	*Without Any Doubt,* Sara Klein-Braslavy.
WFA	*The Writings of St Francis of Assisi,* Constance, Countess de la Warr.
WGMJ	*With a Great Master in India,* Julian Johnson.
WH10	*Sakka's Quest: Sakka-pañhā Sutta,* tr. Sister Vajira.
WH1–464	*Wheel* (Magazine); Buddhist Publication Society.
WH167	*Rebirth Explained,* V.F. Gunaratna.
WH183	*Saṃyutta Nikāya: An Anthology,* Part II, Bhikkhu Ñāṇananda.
WH277	*Transcendental Dependent Arising,* Bhikkhu Bodhi.
WH308	*The Noble Eightfold Path,* Bhikkhu Bodhi;
WH60	*The Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta,* V.F. Gunaratna.
WHME	*Watcher on the Hills,* Raynor C. Johnson.
WHWD	*What Happens When We Die,* Sam Parnia.
WJGY	*The Wish-Fulfilling Jewel,* Dilgo Khyentse, tr. Könchog Tenzin.
WJMA	*The Writings of Justin Martyr and Athenagoras,* tr. M. Dods *et al.*
WJMU	*Wisdom of the Jewish Mystics,* tr. Alan Unterman.
WLT	*The Wisdom of Laotse,* tr. Lin Yutang.
WMJJ	*Way of Mysticism,* Joseph James.
WMPT	*Kunzang Lama'i Shelung,* Patrul Rinpoche, tr. Padmakara Translation Group.

WND1–2	*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin,* 2 vols.
WPJ1–4	*The Works of Philo Judaeus,* 4 vols., tr. C.D. Yonge.
WPW	*The Way of a Pilgrim,* tr. R.M. French.
WRHS	*The World's Religions,* Huston Smith.
WRS1–7	*The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes,* 7 vols., ed. A. Groshart.
WS1–7	*Woodbrooke Studies,* 7 vols., tr. A. Mingana.
WSJ1–2	*The Complete Works of Saint John of the Cross,* 2 vols., tr. D. Lewis.
WSMP	*The World of Silence,* Max Picard, tr. Stanley Godman.
WSNE	*What the Seeker Needs,* Muhyiddin Ibn ʿArabi, tr. Tosun Bayrak al-Jerrahi & Rabia Terri Harris al-Jerrahi.
WT1–3	*The Writings of Tertullian,* 3 vols., tr. S. Thelwall & P. Holmes.
WTAO	*What is Tao?,* Alan Watts.
WTB	*Die Welt des Tao,* ed. Gellért Béky.
WTM1–3	*With the Three Masters,* 3 vols., Rai Sahib Munshi Ram.
WWCG	*The Way of the White Clouds,* Lama Anagarika Govinda.
WXK1	*Wen Xuan, or Selections of Refined Literature,* vol. 1, comp. Tong Xiao, tr. David R. Knechtges.
WZ1–3	*The Wisdom of the Zohar,* 3 vols., arr. F. Lachower & I. Tishby.
X1–90	*Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō,* 90 vols., ed. M. Eun & N. Tatsue.
XB1–23	*Dàozàng xùbiān,* 23 titles in 4 vols., ed. Mǐn Yīdé.
XGB	*Xìngmìng guīzhǐ,* tr. D. Burton-Rose.
YDEF	*Yosher Divrei Emet,* Meshullam Feibush Heller.
YHBI	*The Yogaśāstra,* 6 fascs., Hemachandra, ed. Vijaya Dharma Sūri.
YICH	*Yaśastilaka and Indian Culture,* Krishna Kanta Handiqui.
YJWS	*Yīnshìzǐ jìngzuò wèishēng shíyàn tán,* Jiǎng Wéiqiáo.
YJYS	*Yīnshìzǐ jìngzuò yǎngshēngfǎ,* Jiǎng Wéiqiáo.
YPAA	*Āchārya-Amitagati's Yogasāra-Prābhṛta,* tr. S.C. Jain.
YQ1–122	*Yúnjí qīqiān,* 122 chapters, comp. Zhāng Jūnfáng.
YSB	*Yārī Sāhib kī Ratnāvalī;* Belvedere.
YSHB	*Yoga-Śāstra,* Hemacandra, ed. Muni Mahārāja Śrí Dharmavijaya & Śāstra Viçārada Jainācārya Śrī Vijaya Dharma Sūri.
YSHG	*The Yoga Shastra of Hemachandracharya,* tr. A.S. Gopani.
YSP1–3	*Yeri´ot Shelomo,* 3 vols., Solomon Pappenheim.
YSSS	*Yoga from Shore to Shore,* Swami Satyananda Saraswati.
YU	*The Yoga Upaniṣads,* tr. T.R. S'rīnivāsa Ayyaṅgār.
YVPH	*Yātrā-vidhi-pañcāśaka,* Haribhadra (Prakrit).
YYZQ	*Yuānjiànzhāi yùzuǎn Zhūzǐ quánshū,* comp. L. Guāngdì & X. Cìlǔ.
ZAAH	*Zen in the Art of Archery,* Eugen Herrigel, tr. R.F.C. Hull.
ZAAP	*Zen in the Art of Archery: A Practitioner's View,* unattributed.
ZAEM	*Zohar: Annotated and Explained*, Daniel C. Matt.
ZAGY	*Zen: The Authentic Gate,* Kōun Yamada.

ZBEM	*Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment,* tr. Daniel Matt.
ZBMC	*Zen and the Brain,* James Austin.
ZDMG	*Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft.*
ZHO	*Xiāozāi hùmìng,* tr. Stuart A. Olsen.
ZJCS	*Zen and Japanese Culture,* D.T. Suzuki.
ZKJT	*Zen Kyudo,* Jitsudo Tsuha Roshi & K. Setsuzan Kushner Roshi.
ZMBM	*Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind,* Shunryu Suzuki.
ZPM1–12	*The Zohar,* 12 vols., tr. Daniel C. Matt.
ZRZB	*Zen Ritual,* ed. Steven Heine & Dale S. Wright.
ZSS1–5	*The Zohar,* 5 vols., tr. Harry Sperling & Maurice Simon.
ZTML	*The Zen Teachings of Master Lin-Chi,* Burton Watson.
ZTMP	*Zen Training: Methods and Philosophy,* Katsuki Sekida.
ZW1–991	*Zángwài dàoshū,* 991 titles in 36 vols.

8.1 States of Consciousness, Forms of Knowledge
(ABANDONMENT OF SELF – INNER LIFE)

It is self-evident that man is a conscious being who experiences various and varying states of consciousness. He wakes, he sleeps, he dreams. He can think clearly, he can think in a confused manner. He can concentrate, he can daydream, he can be paralyzed by fear. These are everyday experiences, observable by anyone, which have been documented by philosophers of all times and cultures, and by psychologists of more recent times.

To these observations, mystics and mystically minded individuals have added another dimension: states of consciousness that appear to transcend the ordinary, everyday states of human consciousness. These have been variously described as: superconscious states; near-death experiences; experiences of divine bliss; transport into higher dimensions or spheres of consciousness; even union with or consciousness of a primal Source, an ultimate Reality, a supreme Good, or God. The highest of such states has been called salvation, liberation, *nirvāṇa,* and by many other names.

One of the difficulties encountered when compiling accounts of these subjects is the abundance of philosophies and beliefs among the world's traditions concerning the mental and spiritual constitution of a human being. This would seem to arise from and demonstrate the fact that the majority of human beings do not really know who or what they are, or what life is all about. Speculations, theories, beliefs, and doctrines on the subject abound, but not real knowledge and personal experience. The result is a plethora of terms for mind, intellect, reason, soul, spirit, and so on (covered in Part I, section 5.1). Generally, these terms are used in their original languages with a spread of meaning that changes, not only over time, but also between contemporaneous writers. Characteristically, the terminology of one tradition and culture does not 'map' comfortably with the terminology available in another (in the present case, English), even supposing that such basic terms as 'mind', 'soul' and 'spirit' had specific individual meanings – which is manifestly not the case. There appears to be no way around this conundrum except to try and make the meaning clear in the contexts in which such terms are used, understanding

that the meaning of what may be translated as, say, ‘mind’ or ‘soul’ in one context may well be different from the meaning of the same term when used in another.

This section also contains terms that relate to means of knowing and perception – from the mundane to the highest mystical experience. A number of such terms are used in the epistemology (theories of knowledge) and psychology of the different cultures and traditions included in the *Treasury.* But since the primary intention of this work is to present the mystical perspective, only brief forays into the world of complex intellectual epistemology have been included.

abandonment of self Spiritually, the complete relinquishing of all sense of self, leading ultimately to union with the Divine; also, total surrender to divine providence. Abandonment also refers to abandonment of the world, in the sense of complete detachment from the body and the bodily senses, from people, and from all material things.

Mystics understand the preoccupation with or confinement of one's awareness to the individual self to be all that stands between the soul and God. Abandonment of the self is therefore a recurrent theme in mystic literature. Bernard of Clairvaux speaks of that "self-abandonment of the souls, which is their perfect and supreme state",[1] and Henry Suso speaks of "abandonment of the self in the Nothing".[2] Suso is referring to Meister Eckhart's understanding of God as "Nothing", in the sense that God is the pure spiritual Light in which there is only oneness without differentiation, and in which no self or created thing exists. Then the soul "enters into total self-abnegation" or self-abandonment:

> Whoever says God is here or there, do not believe him. The light that is God shines in the darkness. God is the true Light: to see it, one must be blind and must strip from God all that is 'something'. A master says whoever speaks of God in any likeness, speaks impurely of Him. But to speak of God with nothing is to speak of Him correctly. When the soul is unified and there enters into total self-abnegation, then she finds God as in Nothing.
>
> *Meister Eckhart, Sermons 19, STE1 p.157*

Among the Christian gospels, in *Matthew,* Jesus himself advises, "If any man will come after me, let him forsake himself."[3] The unknown medieval author of the *Book of Privy Counselling* understands this to mean:

> "Anyone who wishes to follow me,… let him abandon himself." … It is as if he were to say: "A man must strip himself of his very self if he will truly be clothed in me, for I am the boundless garment of eternal and unending love."
>
> *Book of Privy Counselling 7–8; cf. CU (12) p.160, CUCW pp.183–84, LPD pp.49, 51*

But this is not an easy task, and one not readily accomplished:

> Where can we find such a soul … who understands that God is one in all, and that all things exist in Him; who realizes that he can never know true humility or total abandonment of self until he lovingly surrenders everything to Him? It is only through this supreme reduction of self to nothing, this genuine humility, this exalting of God as its all in all, in perfect love, that the soul deserves to possess God. Completely

> absorbed in the love of God, and once and for all abandoning himself as less than nothing (were that possible), the soul experiences the power and wisdom and goodness of God, which sustains, shelters and protects him from his enemies both within and without.
>
> *Book of Privy Counselling 6; cf. CU (9) pp.154–55, CUCW p.176, LPD p.40*

Since this Being is the divine essence and reality of the soul – the soul's own true nature – the thirteenth-century Beguine, Hadewijch, recommends:

> If … you wish to have what is yours, give yourself completely in abandonment to God, to become what He is.
>
> *Hadewijch, Letters 2:163, HCW p.51*

In a sense, there are two closely linked aspects of self-abandonment. There is the entirely inward annihilation of self in interior prayer, and there is the reflection of this in outer life. Probably the most all-inclusive writer on the latter was Jean-Pierre de Caussade (1675–1751) in his *Abandonment to Divine Providence.* Giving up oneself to God in outer affairs, he maintains, means complete submission to the divine will:

> Self-abandonment … is the perfect submission to God's will as it reveals itself moment by moment. It is of no consequence to us to know how we have to abandon ourselves, nor what each moment will bring. But what is of supreme importance is that we should abandon ourselves without reserve.
>
> *J.-P. de Caussade, Abandonment to Divine Providence 4:3, ADP p.76*

And he refers to the Lord's prayer, "Your will be done …",[4] as the epitome of such surrender:

> The full and complete meaning of self-abandonment to His will is embraced in the matchless prayer given to us by Jesus Christ.… The events of every moment are stamped with the will of God.
>
> *J.-P. de Caussade, Abandonment to Divine Providence 2:10, ADP p.52*

Such abandonment, he says, does not take place on its own, but is reached through "a blending of faith, hope, and love":

> This state of abandonment is a blending of faith, hope and love in one single act which unites us to God and all His activities. When these three virtues are united, they of course become one, and so form a single act, a single raising of the heart to God, and a simple abandonment to Him.
>
> *J.-P. de Caussade, Abandonment to Divine Providence 3:3, ADP p.62*

This, he writes, is the "essence of spirituality":

> The essence of spirituality is contained in this phrase: 'complete and utter abandonment to the will of God'. By that I mean we should never think of ourselves, but be continually occupied with loving and obeying Him. We must put aside all those fears, those uneasy broodings, those qualms of conscience, and those anxieties which can arise from the concern we have for achieving holiness and our salvation. As God wants to look after all our affairs, let us leave them all to Him, so that we can concentrate our whole attention on Him.
>
> *J.-P. de Caussade, Abandonment to Divine Providence 4:1, ADP p.73*

Having abandoned everything to God, only the present moment is of consequence:

> If we have abandoned ourselves, there is only one rule for us: the duty of the present moment. The soul is as light as a feather, as fluid as water, simple as a child, and as lively as a ball in responding to all the impulses of grace. We are like molten metal which takes the shape of the mould into which it is poured, and can just as easily assume any form God wishes to give us. We are like the air which stirs continually, or water which fills every vessel no matter what its shape.
>
> We must offer ourselves to God like a clean, smooth canvas and not worry ourselves about what God may choose to paint on it, for we have perfect trust in Him, have abandoned ourselves to Him, and are so busy doing our duty that we forget ourselves and all our needs. The more closely we devote ourselves to our little task, which is so simple, so secret and so hidden and apparently so paltry, the more does God enrich and adorn it: "God works wonders for those He loves."[5]
>
> *J.-P. de Caussade, Abandonment to Divine Providence 4:6, ADP pp.81–82*

And when a soul has placed everything in God's hands, then it finds that even the smallest events of life have meaning:

> It is of the essence of the state of self-abandonment that, although the soul thus abandoned always leads a secret life, it yet receives from God most extraordinary gifts by means of the most ordinary things and by events which seem quite natural and mere casual happenings, through occurrences which appear to be a normal part of human life. For instance, the simplest sermons, the most ordinary conversations and the most trivial books can become, through God's will, sources of knowledge and wisdom. This is why self-abandoned souls always carefully gather up the crumbs which the proud tread underfoot,

> for everything is precious to them, and there is nothing which does not enrich them. They are completely indifferent to everything, yet neglect nothing, for they respect all things and extract from them all that is useful.
>
> *J.-P. de Caussade, Abandonment to Divine Providence 6:4, ADP p.106*

This state can be attained only by becoming like putty in God's hands:

> This work in our souls cannot be accomplished by cleverness, intelligence, or any subtlety of mind, but only by completely abandoning ourselves to the divine action.... It is surely clear that we shall not assume that image which the eternal wisdom wishes us to have by trying to understand all the mysterious activities of God down through the centuries. We can receive God's seal on our souls only by abandoning our will to him, not by any efforts of our reason.
>
> *J.-P. de Caussade, Abandonment to Divine Providence 2:12, ADP pp.56–57*

He also says that the divine presence is felt according to the degree of abandonment, though ultimately, it is all a matter of love for the Divine:

> A soul comes under the influence of God from the moment it turns toward Him, and this influence fluctuates according to the extent of the soul's abandonment. The whole business of self-abandonment is only the business of loving, and love achieves everything.... For those who abandon themselves to it, God's love contains every good thing, and if you long for it with all your heart and soul, it will be yours. All God asks for is love.
>
> *J.-P. de Caussade, Abandonment to Divine Providence 6:9, ADP pp.113–14*

The essence of self-abandonment is therefore relinquishing all thought of self. As Jacob Boehme writes:

> When you stand still from the thinking of self and the willing of self; when both your intellect and will are quiet and passive to the expressions of the eternal world and spirit; and when your soul is winged up and above that which is temporal, the outward senses and the imagination being locked up by holy abstraction, then the eternal hearing, seeing and speaking will be revealed in you; and so God hears and sees through you and whispers to your spirit. Blessed are you, therefore, if you can stand still from your self-thinking and self-willing, and can stop the turning wheel of your imagination and senses.
>
> *Jacob Boehme, Signature of All Things; cf. SAT p.227*

See also: **abandonment of the world** (▸4), **presence of God (practice of)** (8.5).

1. Bernard of Clairvaux, *On the Love of God* 11:30, *LGB* pp.106–7.
2. Henry Suso, *Life of the Servant* 2:33, *LSS* p.98.
3. *Matthew* 16:24.
4. *Matthew* 6:10; *cf. KJV.*
5. *Psalms* 4:3; *cf. JB.*

abhisamaya (S/Pa), **mngon rtogs** (T), **xiànguān** (C), **genkan** (J) *Lit.* breakthrough, penetration; realization, comprehension, clear understanding, insight; from the verb *abhisameti* (to make a breakthrough, to realize, to awaken to); inner realization; clear, direct understanding of the *Dhamma,* often as *dhammābhisamaya;* especially, a full and clear grasp of the meaning of the four noble truths at the level of spiritual attainment of the stream-enterer *(sotāpanna)* – of one who has entered upon the supramundane or transcendental *(lokuttara)* path, and is henceforth known as a 'noble person *(ariya-puggala)*' or 'noble disciple'. In commentaries on the Pali *suttas, abhisamaya* is used synonymously with *paṭivedha* (penetration, realization).

The *Abhisamaya Saṃyutta* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* lists several examples of a noble disciple's breakthrough to or realization of the *Dhamma (dhammābhisamaya),* which implies entry to the inner, transcendental or supramundane *(lokuttara)* stage of the spiritual journey. The mundane *(lokiya)* stage of the path begins when the seeker sets out to develop virtue, concentration and wisdom, and culminates when these qualities have been developed to such a degree that he sees the three primary characteristics of mundane existence – impermanence *(anicca),* suffering *(dukkha),* and having no permanent, unchanging self or personal identity *(anattā)* – as they really are. The seeker is now ready to embark upon the supramundane stage of the journey, leading ultimately to *nibbāna.* At this point, he is said to have entered the 'stream' that leads to *nibbāna,* and is hence known as a stream-enterer *(sotāpanna).* The four stages of the supramundane path represent progressive release from all the fetters *(saṃyojanas),* defilements *(āsavas)* and impurities *(kilesas)* that bind living beings to the cycle of birth and death.

In the *Abhisamaya Saṃyutta,* the Buddha gives a series of examples describing the extent of the suffering *(i.e. kamma)* that has already been destroyed by a noble disciple who has "made the breakthrough *(abhisameti)*":

> "*Bhikkhus,* what do you think, which is more: a little bit of dust that I have taken up on my fingernail or this great earth?"
>
> "Venerable sir, the great earth is more. The little bit of dust that the Blessed One has taken up on his fingernail is trifling. It does

> not amount to a hundredth part, or a thousandth part, or a hundred-thousandth part of the great earth."
>
> "So too, *bhikkhus,* for a noble disciple, a person accomplished in view who has made the breakthrough *(abhisameti),* the suffering that has been destroyed and eliminated is more, while that which remains is trifling. The latter does not amount to a hundredth part, or a thousandth part, or a hundred-thousandth part of the former mass of suffering that has been destroyed and eliminated, as there is a maximum of seven more lives. Of such great benefit, *bhikkhus,* is the breakthrough to the *Dhamma (dhammābhisamaya),* of such great benefit is obtaining the vision of the *Dhamma.*"
>
> *Saṃyutta Nikāya 13:1, Nakhasikhā Sutta, PTSS2 pp.133–34; cf. CDBB p.621*

Parallel examples include the comparison of a drop of water to the amount of water in a vast lake, an ocean, or at the confluence of the Ganges and other major rivers; or the comparison of a few pieces of gravel compared to the size of the Himalayas.[1]

Abhisamaya is also used for clear understanding of items in other summaries of Buddhist doctrine, such as the noble eightfold path *(ariyāṭṭhangika-magga)* and the twelvefold chain of dependent origination *(paṭicca-samuppāda).* The *Daṭṭhabba Sutta* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* says that "completely breaking through conceit *(sammā-mānābhisamaya)*" is what "makes an end to suffering".[2] The *Paccaya Sutta* explains that the successive realization of the causal relationships between each of the twelve links in the chain of dependent origination are breakthroughs experienced by a *buddha* on his path to enlightenment: "A *tathāgata* awakens to *(abhisambujjhati)* this and breaks through *(abhisameti)* to it."[3]

Among the analytical texts, the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* enumerates forty-four kinds of *abhisamaya* as realization of the items in various doctrinal lists.[4] Other texts and schools identify and describe a number of other forms of realization *(abhisamaya),* such as the successive realizations attained by a *bodhisattva* as he passes through the various stages on the path to enlightenment. *Abhisamaya* implies inner, intuitive or even gnostic understanding or realization. The texts also discuss whether *abhisamaya* of the four noble truths takes place gradually or instantaneously.

1. *Saṃyutta Nikāya* 13:1–11, *Abhisamaya Saṃyutta, PTSS2* pp.134–39.
2. *Saṃyutta Nikāya* 36:5, *Daṭṭhabba Sutta, PTSS4* p.207; *cf. CDBB* p.1263.
3. *Saṃyutta Nikāya* 12:20, *Paccaya Sutta, PTSS3* pp.25–26, *CDBB* p.551; see also *Anguttara Nikāya* 3:134, *Dhammaniyāma Sutta, PTSA1* p.286.
4. *Paṭisambhidāmagga* 23:1–12, *PTSP2* pp.215–18.

abjad (A/P) A mnemonic composed of the Arabic letters equivalent to *a-b-j-d;* the first of eight such letter groups, each group being named individually, as for instance, *hawwaz,* comprising the letters *h-w-z;* an arrangement of the Arabic alphabet according to a numeric value assigned to each letter; thus also, a form of numerology; used by a number of Sufis as a metaphor for superficial knowledge, as opposed to true mystical experience and understanding:

> You who have not escaped
> from this fleeting caravanserai (the material world) –
> How can you know the meaning of 'self-extinction'
> and 'intoxication' and 'expansion'?
> If you do know, it is only hearsay,
> handed down to you from father and grandfather.
> To you, these names are like *abjad:*
> How plain and evident to all children are *abjad* and *hawwaz:*
> yet the real meaning is far away.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī I:2726–28; cf. MJR2 p.148*

The eighteenth-century Punjabi Sufi, Bulleh Shāh, asserts that the only knowledge required is *alif,* the first letter of the Arabic alphabet, having the numerical value of one, and commonly used as a symbol for *Allāh,* the one God. When the soul knows God, it automatically knows everything, for God is everywhere and within everything:

> Gather no more knowledge, O friend!
> This knowledge will be of no avail:
> all you need to know is *alif.*
> Life is fleeting and its end uncertain:
> Gather no more knowledge, O friend! . . .
>
> You read and ponder over astrology;
> You count all the zodiac signs;
> You read charms and practice exorcism;
> You make amulets and calculate *abjad:*
> Gather no more knowledge, O friend!
>
> *Bulleh Shāh, Kullīyāt 79, KBS pp.163–66, SBSU pp.350–51; cf. BSPS pp.220–21*

See also: **alif** (2.2).

absorption (in God) Mystically, absorption of the soul in God; the intense and loving focus of the soul in God, such that the sense of self is entirely eliminated; in its highest degree, union with God.

There are a number of characteristics common to practically all such experiences. St Teresa speaks of love, sweetness, joy, intoxication, absorption, unconsciousness of self, light, and communication of "great truths":

> This sweet love of our God … enters the soul with great sweetness, and brings it such joy and satisfaction that it cannot understand how or in what way this blessing is entering it. So anxious is it not to lose this love that it would gladly stay still without moving and neither speak nor even look anywhere lest it should vanish.… Great truths are communicated to it; for this light, which dazzles it because it cannot understand what it is, shows it the vanity of the world.… When experiencing this joy, it is so deeply inebriated and absorbed that it seems to be beside itself and in a kind of divine intoxication, knowing not what it is desiring, or saying, or asking for. In fact, it is unconscious of itself, yet not so much so that it cannot understand something of what is passing.
>
> *Teresa of Ávila, On the Song of Songs 4; cf. CWTA2 p.384*

She says that the awareness of God expands and the world recedes:

> When in prayer one day, I felt that my soul was so completely within God that there seemed to be no world at all, but that I was absorbed in Him. It was then that I was taught the meaning of that verse in the *Magnificat:* "My soul does magnify the Lord,"[1] in a way that I cannot forget.
>
> *Teresa of Ávila, Testimonies 61; cf. CWTA1 p.365*

Richard Rolle had the same experience:

> The love of Christ makes him who has been absorbed by it dead, as it were, to the attraction of outward things.
>
> *Richard Rolle, Fire of Love 28; cf. FLML (1:28) p.119, FLRR p.131*

Walter Hilton describes a state of absorption in the "sweet sound of God's Voice" which brings the soul "a delight far transcending anything it has ever known", such that "the soul feels that it is touching God Himself":

> When this Voice sounds within a soul, it is sometimes so powerful that the soul immediately lays aside whatever it is doing – whether prayer, speaking, reading, meditation, or any physical occupation – and listens to it alone. And as it listens to the sweet sound of God's Voice, it is filled with peace and love, transported far beyond all thought of earthly things. In this peace, God reveals Himself to the soul, sometimes as

> Lord to be feared, sometimes as a Father to be reverenced, and sometimes as a Spouse to be loved. At such times the soul is absorbed in a wonderful reverence and loving contemplation of God, which brings it a delight far transcending anything it has ever known. It enjoys so great a sense of security and peace in God, and so acute a realization of His goodness, that it wishes always to remain in this state, and never to do anything else. The soul feels that it is touching God Himself, and by virtue of His ineffable touch it is made whole and stable, reverently contemplating God alone, as though nothing existed save God and itself. At these times, it is upheld solely by His favour and wonderful goodness, and is profoundly conscious of this truth.
>
> *Walter Hilton, Ladder of Perfection 2:44, LPH p.246*

Luis de León speaks of such a state of union and absorption with the divine Word that "the soul not only has God dwelling within it, but is indeed God":

> What, then, shall I say of … this closest of all bonds with the divine Word, and that personal union which alone, if all else should fail, is immensity of righteousness and riches? For the Word unites with that happy soul, and through it with the body likewise, penetrating it wholly, and absorbing it in himself, so that in very truth the soul not only has God dwelling within it, but is indeed God. Truly, that soul has within itself all that which God is: His being, His wisdom, His goodness, His power. And not only has it God in itself, but He is united with it so closely and intimately that it cannot free itself neither can it be separate.
>
> *Luis de León, Nombres de Cristo, NCFO3 p.240; cf. in SSM1 p.272*

See also: **abandonment of self**, **annihilation of self**, **letting go**.

1. *Luke* 1:46; *cf. KJV.*

achint (H/Pu) *Lit.* without *(a)* thought *(chint);* absence of thought, without conception; hence, worryless or carefree; thoughtless, careless, rash; also, without effort, spontaneously; from the Sanskrit, *achintā* (thoughtlessness); describes the carefree or worryless state that arises when the mind ceases all activity or thought, however subtle.

In its highest mystic sense, *achint* is synonymous with *sahaj* (balance, peace, equipoise, rest), which implies being without thought or mental waves, in a spontaneous or natural state, in an effortless state, and so on. It refers to the natural condition of the soul that is liberated from all aspects of the mind. Many mystics have described this state of consciousness. Guru Arjun writes of how effortlessly it has come upon him:

Spontaneously *(achint),*
my works are perfectly accomplished.
Spontaneously *(achint),*
I am rid of sorrow.
Spontaneously *(achint),*
my enemies have become friends.
Spontaneously *(achint),*
I have brought my mind under control. . . .
Spontaneously *(achint),*
the unstruck Melody . . . resounds within me.
Spontaneously *(achint),*
the Lord of the universe has revealed Himself to me.
Guru Arjun, Ādi Granth 1157, AGK

Achint also appears in the expression, *chint achintā* (thought and no-thought), which refers to the vacillating mental state of anxiety:

Spontaneously *(achint),*
all my cares and worries *(chint achintā)* have been taken away.
Guru Arjun, Ādi Granth 1157, AGK

Free from all anxieties *(chint achintā)*
and rid of all sorrows *(soch asochā)* –
Now my grief, greed and worldly attachments are all gone.
By God's grace my ailment of egotism is cured
and *Jam* (Messenger of Death) is no longer a terror unto me.
Guru Arjun, Ādi Granth 671, MMS

Achint is also used as an attribute and epithet of God, as in *achint Purush* (the Being beyond thought, the carefree Being) and *achint Sāhib* (the carefree Lord).

ʿ**adam** (A/P) *Lit.* nonbeing, nonexistence, annihilation; contrasted with *mawjūd* (P. existence); used synonymously with *nīst,* which is generally contrasted with *hast* (existence); commonly used in reference to the unconditioned, formless oneness of the Divine, as opposed to the unreal existence in duality of all things in creation; or, conversely, the essential nonexistence or unreality of all things in creation, when contrasted with the real existence of the Divine; also, the nonexistence of the individual who has attained selflessness, the annihilation *(fanā', nīst,* or *ʿadam)* of the self. In the latter sense, *ʿadam* and *fanā'* are more or less synonymous, though *fanā'* is the commoner term.

Rūmī records the longing of the lover for such annihilation:

I am drunken with desire for nonexistence *(ʿadam),*
not for the existent *(mawjūd);*
For the Beloved of the realm of nonexistence *(ʿadam)*
is more faithful.

Rūmī, Maśnavī V:315; cf. MJR6 p.21

Addressing his *shaykh,* Shams-i Tabrīz, Rūmī expresses his longing for complete annihilation in the spiritual form of his master:

Tonight, take my spirit totally from my body,
so that I may no longer have shape and name in the world!
At this moment, I am drunk in you – give me another cup!
Then I may be obliterated from the two worlds in you,
and be done with it.
When I have been annihilated through you,
and become what you know,
then I will take the cup of nonexistence *(jām-i ʿadam)*
and drink it, cup after cup.
When the spirit becomes radiant through you,
when the candle lights up – if not consumed by you,
it is raw, raw.

Give me now the wine of nonexistence *(bādah-ʾi ʿadam),*
instant by instant;
When I have entered nonexistence *(ʿadam),*
I will not know the house from its roof.
When your nonexistence *(ʿadam)* increases,
the spirit will prostrate itself to you a hundred times –
O you to whose nonexistence *(ʿadam)*
thousands of existences *(wujūd)* are slave!

Give me wine, measure by measure!
Deliver me from my own existence *(wujūd)!* …
Send up waves from nonexistence *(ʿadam)* to steal me away!
How long will I pace the Ocean's shore in fear?
The snare of my king, Shams al-Dīn, is catching prey in Tabrīz,
but I have no fear of the snare, for I am within it.

Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1716:17966–74, KSD4 p.53; cf. in SPL p.320

See also: **fanāʾ**, **hast** (2.2), **nīst** (2.2).

adhicitta (Pa), **adhichitta** (S) *Lit.* higher *(adhi)* mind *(citta),* higher consciousness; used especially in Pali Buddhist literature.

Adhicitta is designated 'higher' to distinguish it from the more ordinary wholesome *(kusala)* mind that gives rise to the ten categories of wholesome action that relate to good conduct in this world, in body, speech, and mind. It is the subtle and finer mind or consciousness that prevails in the eight *jhānas* (states of meditative absorption), and which is "higher than the ordinary (wholesome) mind".[1] Meditative concentration is regarded as 'higher' because its focus is on levels of mind and consciousness above or beyond normal human functioning. *Adhicitta* can itself sometimes imply meditation.

According to the *Dhammapada,* the Buddha says that "devotion to *adhicitta*" is one of the fundamentals on the path of the *buddhas:*

> Not reviling, not harming,
> restraint according to the moral code *(pātimokkha),*
> moderation in eating, dwelling in solitude,
> devoted to meditation *(adhicitta)* –
> This is the teachings of the *buddhas.*
>
> *Dhammapada 14:7; cf. DPN, DPR*

In the *Vitakkasaṇṭhāna Sutta* ('Discourse on the Removal of Distracting Thoughts'), the Buddha begins with the observation, "When a *bhikkhu* is intent on (cultivating) higher consciousness *(adhicitta),* from time to time he should give attention to five themes *(nimittas).*" In this context, the five themes are practical means of countering the intrusion of negative or unwholesome thoughts, should they become persistent during meditation or at other times. The five *nimittas* are: changing the subject of the meditation to something that does not encourage negative thoughts; pondering the dangers of such negative thoughts; paying no attention to them; examining their cause in order to bring them to a standstill; and altogether crushing them.[2]

In the *Laṭukikopama Sutta,* using a similar expression, the Buddha speaks of a monk who might see another *"bhikkhu* in a monastery park sitting in the shade of a tree, his hands and feet well washed after he had eaten a delicious meal, devoting himself to higher consciousness *(adhicitta)".*[3] The Buddha means that the monk is sitting in meditation.

In his *Visuddhimagga,* the fifth-century scholarly monk and commentator Buddhaghosa, speaking of the various meditative techniques that are used to attain the *jhānas,* describes the quality of consciousness that prevails in those states as *adhicitta.*[4]

The *Paṭisambhidāmagga* points out some of the states of mind that cause "defects in concentration" when practising "mindfulness of breathing", as a result of which the levels of higher consciousness are not experienced:

> The mind that hunts the past, that loves the future, that is slack,
> over-exerted, or enticed, or repelled, is unconcentrated.
> These six defects in concentration *(samādhi)*
> based upon mindfulness of breathing *(ānāpānasati)*
> are such that when they stain his thought,
> he does not know higher consciousness *(adhicitta).*
>
> *Paṭisambhidāmagga 3:11, PTSP1 p.165; cf. PDPM p.167*

Adhicitta is used in the expression *adhicitta-sikkhā* (higher consciousness training), a generic term for concentration, meditation, and cultivation of the higher mind. As used in the Pali *suttas*[5] and elsewhere, *adhicitta-sikkhā* is often correlated with *samādhikkhandha* (concentration group), the second of three categories into which the constituent elements of the noble eightfold path *(ariya-aṭṭhangika-magga)* are divided. The concentration group consists of right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

See also: **trisikkhā** (‣4).

1. *Majjhima Nikāya* 20, *Vitakkasaṇṭhāna Sutta, PTSM1* p.119; *cf. MDBB* pp.211, 1206 (n.239).
2. *Majjhima Nikāya* 20, *Vitakkasaṇṭhāna Sutta, PTSM1* pp.119–21; *cf. MDBB* pp.211–13.
3. *Majjhima Nikāya* 66, *Laṭukikopama Sutta, PTSM1* pp.451–52; *cf. MDBB* pp.554–55.
4. Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 8:73–76, *PTSV* pp.246–47.
5. *E.g. Majjhima Nikāya* 48, *Kosambiya Sutta, PTSM1* p.324.

adhigama (S/Pa), **rtogs pa** (T), **zhèng** (C), **shō** (J) *Lit.* attainment, realization, knowledge; personal experience; especially as the Buddhist *adhigama-dharma,* which is realization of the *Dharma* through direct personal experience; realization in which the duality of knower and known has been transcended; contrasted with *āgama-dharma,* which is conceptual or intellectual understanding gained by the study *(āgama)* of the scriptural tradition. It is said that the Buddha and all enlightened beings realize the *Dharma* through their own personal experience *(adhigama-dharma).*

Adhigama-dharma is commonly regarded as comprising three phases of training or spiritual discipline *(shikshā): adhishīla-shikshā* (training in higher morality), *adhisamādhi-shikshā* (training in higher meditation), and *adhiprajñā-shikshā* (training in higher wisdom). These three constitute the spiritual path, which leads to the highest realization.

advaya-jñāna (S), **gnyis su med pa'i ye shes** (T), **bùèr zhì** (C), **funi chi** (J) *Lit.* non-dual *(advaya, gnyis su med pa, bùèr, funi)* knowledge *(jñāna, ye shes, zhì, chi);* in Buddhism, mystical gnosis that transcends the duality of subject-object or perceiver-perceived that characterizes all perceptions at the sensory level; the state of enlightenment in which everything is perceived as one; a fundamental *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* doctrine.

See also: **jñāna**.

āgama (S/Pa), **lung** (T), **āhán jīng** (C), **agongyō** (J) *Lit.* reading, studying; acquisition of knowledge or science; hence, traditional or scriptural doctrine; the scriptures themselves; a class of scriptures, especially Jain, Buddhist Sanskrit, and tantric texts; also, as verbal testimony from a trustworthy source, one of the six categories of valid knowledge *(pramāṇa),* also called *āptavākya,* according to Indian philosophy. In Buddhism, *āgama-dharma* is contrasted with *adhigama-dharma,* which is realization of the *Dharma* through direct personal experience.

See also: **adhigama**, **pramāṇa**.

agüyjé (G) *Lit.* perfection; spiritual perfection; perfection and abundance of spiritual growth while still living on earth.

As described by the anthropologist Miguel Alberto Bartolomé (*b.*1945),[1] the Avá-Chiripá group of the South American Guaraní believe that the purpose of human life is to attain the state of *agüyjé* or spiritual perfection. To achieve *agüyjé* a person must closely observe the moral and religious laws, eat a mostly vegetarian diet, and practise techniques of concentration. By these actions, the soul is purified of its animal nature, and both body and soul take on a lightness.

The advanced shamans among the Avá-Chiripá are notable for having achieved *agüyjé.* After reaching the state of *agüyjé,* an adept can move to an even higher spiritual level called *kandire,* and gain access to divine wisdom.

The Mburuvicha – Mbyá shamans – describe great 'medical heroes' of the race who reached *agüyjé.* They were dedicated to their spiritual practice and ate a strictly vegetarian diet. Among a number mentioned by name, the shaman Kapitá Chikú was reputed to be able by divine grace to enter paradise without suffering death.[2]

See also: **kandire**.

1. See Miguel Bartolomé, "Shamanism Among the Avá-Chiripá," *SAC* pp.112, 117.
2. León Cádogan, "Ayvu Rapyta," *ARLC* pp.143–48.

aḥdut, **aḥdut hashva´ah** (He) *Lit.* unity *(aḥdut);* union, state of oneness; unity by equalization *(hashva´ah);* union by reconciliation of opposites; union in the One. *Aḥdut* is related to the noun *eḥad* (one) and *yiḥud* (unification).

Aḥdut depicts the indivisible oneness and transcendence of God. In the Kabbalah, the divine Oneness is generally called the *Ayn-Sof* (limitless, infinite). It is the spiritual 'realm' or source beyond all differentiation; it precedes and encompasses the entire creation, transcending all divisions and duality; it existed 'before' the projection of the opposites that characterize creation. In the material creation, these opposites manifest as light and dark, positive and negative, pleasure and pain, health and sickness, peace and conflict, love and hate, male and female, hot and cold, wealth and poverty, and so on.

Hashva´ah points to the existence of opposites within the One. It is the aspect of the Divine that encompasses duality. It implies the immanence of the divine Unity and constant change as the two pervading principles of material existence.

Aḥdut hashva´ah is the state of mystical union experienced when the soul ascends through the physical, mental and spiritual levels of consciousness and, overcoming duality, reunites with its divine Source. Propelled by *devekut* (cleaving, intense devotion and attachment to God), the soul goes beyond emotion, intellect and all the opposites, and attaches itself solely to the divine power. Other expressions used to translate *aḥdut hashva´ah* include 'unified balance' and the Neoplatonic term *coincidentia oppositorum* (L), the existence of opposites within one unified whole.

The concept of *aḥdut* is associated with the kabbalistic model of the creative process that began with the Infinite *(Ayn-Sof)* withdrawing into Itself. Rabbi Isaac Luria (C16th) called this process *ẓimẓum* (contraction). According to his description, this contraction or withdrawal produced a vacuum *(tehiru).* Within this vacuum, the *Ayn-Sof* projected the potential for differentiation, which resulted in the process of creation. The ten *sefirot* (emanations of divine qualities or attributes) of Wisdom and Understanding, Mercy and Judgment and so on, were projected from the divine Unity into the vacuum as contrasting pairs.

Wisdom *(Ḥokhmah),* for example, is positive, conceived as the force that gives its energy to Understanding *(Binah),* creating a synthesis or synergy that gives rise to the 'shadow' *sefirah* (emanation) of Knowledge *(Da'at).* Similarly, the positive attribute of Mercy or Love *(Ḥesed)* interacts with the negative attribute of *Gevurah* (Might), also called Judgment *(Din),* giving rise to the divine energy of Beauty *(Tiferet).* These contrasting attributes *(midot)* of the Divine manifest in all realms and levels of the creation. Their interaction brings into existence the spiritual, causal, and physical realms or levels of creation – emanation *(aẓilut),* creation *(briah),* formation *(yeẓirah),* and actualization or making *('assiyah).*

The path by which the One, the Source of all, becomes the many in its descent into creation is also the path – in reverse – of ascent to the One. An inherent attraction draws the *sefirot* to merge back into their Source. A well-known graphical representation of the *sefirot,* often referred to as the Tree of Life or the Three Pillars, shows the interaction of the *sefirot* with each other and how, in their meeting, they generate energy centres that allow the divine power to flow outward through the successive levels of creation and also to return to its source in the One. This schematic places the positive qualities or *sefirot* on the right and the negative on the left, with the energy centres generated by their meeting forming a central axis. No concept or imagery of this world, however, can portray the manner by which space and time and all things encompassed by them have come into being, let alone the way in which the higher realms are created and sustained.

The term *aḥdut hashva´ah* first appears in the works of the early Spanish kabbalist ʿAzriel of Gerona (1160–1238), in which he describes the unity of the *Ayn-Sof.* Using a question-and-answer format, ʿAzriel responds to an imaginary seeker's query concerning the nature of the *Ayn-Sof,* which he describes as transcendent, hidden, changeless and unique, beyond the finite, beyond any differentiation or duality:

> Know that everything visible and perceivable to human contemplation is limited, and that everything that is limited is finite, and that everything that is finite is insignificant. Conversely, that which is not limited is called *Ayn-Sof* and is completely undifferentiated in a complete and changeless unity *(ha-hashva´ah gemurah be-aḥdut ha-she´imah she´ein bah shinnuy).* And if He is (truly) without limit, then nothing exists outside Him. And since He is both exalted and hidden, He is the essence of all that is concealed and revealed. But since He is hidden, He is both the root of faith and the root of rebelliousness.
>
> *ʿAzriel of Gerona, "Explanation of the Ten Sefirot," in SDEM p.2, in EKD pp.89–90*

For ʿAzriel, *Ayn-Sof* is "the principle in which everything hidden and visible meet, and as such it is the common root of both faith and unbelief".[1] Thus even the opposites of faith and doubt come together in the One.

According to the sefirotic concept, the meeting of opposites creates energy, which is what brings about the projection of the successive levels of creation. In modern terms, it can be said that *aḥdut hashva´ah* is the power of synthesis, of fusion. When the opposites meet and unite, energy is released. It is also this same energy that attracts the sparks of light that were separated from the source and are ubiquitous in all created things, drawing them back to their singular origin.

ʿAzriel writes that each *sefirah* is the synthesis of "everything and its opposite" in a kind of merging of energy:

> The nature of *sefirah* is the synthesis of everything and its opposite. For if they did not possess the power of synthesis, there would be no energy in anything; for that which is light is not-darkness and that which is darkness is not-light.
>
> Therefore, we should liken their nature to the will of the soul, for it is the synthesis of all the desires and thoughts stemming from it. Even though they are multifarious, their source is one, either in thesis or antithesis. This is the case with every function of the soul: intellect, aesthetics, love, and mercy – even though they are all (created) *ex nihilo,* their existence is not absolute.
>
> *ʿAzriel of Gerona, "Explanation of the Ten Sefirot," in SDEM p.5, in EKD p.94*

The Kabbalah taught by Rabbi Isaac Luria approximately four centuries later built on these ideas when he proposed that the purpose of worship – and indeed of life – is to raise the exiled divine sparks to their origin in God and, in a parallel process, to restore the divine harmony through *aḥdut hashva´ah.* Luria taught specific spiritual 'unification *(yiḥud)*' exercises and focused prayers through which the positive and negative *sefirot* could be reconciled with each other in order to restore harmony within the Godhead – a harmony or unity that had been disrupted at the time of creation, when the positive and negative *sefirot* had become estranged.

According to Luria's vision, following the contraction *(ẓimẓum),* a catastrophic disruption took place within the Divine. This resulted in the sparks of the Divine, particles of the primal light of God, being exiled from the divine realm. This exile is also a manifestation of the disharmony of opposites, exemplified by the opposites of the *sefirot* and the estrangement of the manifested physical realm from the spiritual realm that is its origin. Thus the purpose of all worship, according to Luria and the kabbalists and *ḥasidim* who took their inspiration from him, is articulated in *aḥdut hashva´ah;* it is the restoration *(tikkun)* of the exiled sparks to their source.

The Baʿal Shem Tov (1698–1760), the first master in the Hasidic tradition, taught that the reconciliation of opposites was an important stage in the individual's mystic journey from the human to the Divine. A human being must divest himself of his corporeal nature, must raise himself to his intrinsic spiritual nature, which has been obscured by his physicality.

Rabbi Dov Baer (*c.*1704–1772), the Maggid (preacher) of Mezherich and successor to the Baʿal Shem Tov, wrote that his master taught this principle through a wordplay – saying that all beings are reconciled in the *aḥdut* (oneness) of the divine nothingness *(ayin)* through *devekut* (intense devotion), which transforms the individual self or ego *(ani)* into nothingness *(ayin).*

In Hebrew, both *ayin* (nothingness) and *ani* (self) are spelled with the same letters but in a different order.

In the next generation of Hasidism, Rabbi Shneur Zalman (1745–1813) of Lyady in Belarus expanded on the concept of *aḥdut hashva´ah,* which was developed even further by his successors, especially Rabbi Aharon Halevi Horowitz (1766–1828) of Staroselye, also in Belarus. The lineage that began with Rabbi Shneur Zalman was called *Ḥabad,* a acronym comprising the first letters of the *sefirot* of *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom) and *Binah* (Understanding), which, through their synergy, produce the 'shadow' *sefirah* of *Da'at* (Knowledge).

The *Ḥabad,* who survive today as the most prevalent Hasidic movement, believe that just as the Divine longs to express Itself in the creation through the projection of Its essence (power and light), so the essence, trapped in the physical body, longs to return to its Source, to unity in the One. This belief presumes that the divine essence is manifested in physical existence and that it possesses the potential for return to its spiritual Source. The *Ḥabad* masters articulated how a mystic can raise his consciousness to the level of the One, bringing all opposites into harmony and reconciling differentiation within the One. Physical existence, they explained, contains the potential for the experience of spiritual reality because the divine unity is present in the many:

> The *Ḥabad* concept of *hashva´ah* (equalization) is utilized to define the absolute divine presence throughout all of existence, which is the unity of opposites, and the essential equality of the divine Unity in all worlds. Equalization is understood to mean that all the aspects, including all the reversals and contradictions within them, have a single, common root that equalizes (balances) them within the Infinite, so that all the differences are cancelled out.
>
> *Rachel Elior, Paradoxical Ascent to God, PAGH p.67*

The emanation of all creation from a "single, common root" and the potential for creation to return to that root permits

> the transition from the Infinite to the finite, and the transcending of the finite to the Infinite, and its incorporation with it. This dual dialectic is the goal of the divine intention and the way in which its completeness is revealed, for … the divine completeness is simultaneously composed of two poles: that of revelation in the *yesh* (something, substance, being, existence) and that of the nullification of the *yesh.*
>
> *Rachel Elior, Paradoxical Ascent to God, PAGH pp.69–70*

That is, the divine unity is revealed in both the physical visible realm of *yesh* (something) and the invisible spiritual realm of *ayin* (nothingness). "Dialectic", here refers to the 'dialogue' or interaction between the opposites.

Several passages from the teachings of Rabbi Shneur Zalman and his son and successor Rabbi Dov Baer Schneerson (1773–1827, named after the Baʿal Shem Tov's successor), together with the explanations of the modern scholar and translator Rachel Elior (*b.*1949), illuminate this process. Rabbi Shneur Zalman writes:

> The Holy One, blessed be He, . . . is a perfect unity, without any composition and plurality at all. . . . His essence and being and His knowledge are all absolutely one. . . . Therefore, just as it is impossible for any creature in the world to comprehend the essence of the Creator and His being, so it is impossible to comprehend the essence of His knowledge; only to believe, with a faith which transcends intellect and comprehension, that the Holy One, blessed be He, is completely one and unique.
>
> *Rabbi Shneur Zalman, Tanya, LASZ p.165, in PAGH p.181*

The opposites are brought into balance through *devekut* (cleaving, intense devotion) to God, since God is the unity transcending opposites. Rachel Elior explains that everything in the divine realm is in constant motion between the *yesh* and the *ayin* – existence and nothingness, manifestation and concealment, becoming and annihilation, emanation and withdrawal. This constant swing between becoming and annihilation is what Elior calls the *Ḥabad*'s "dialectical theology":

> Divine worship in *Ḥabad* is based on the dialectical theology that interprets all reality and the whole of human experience as a reflection of the divine unity of opposites. . . . Nothing in existence is grasped unilaterally. Everything is interpreted as twofold in its meaning and presented as the point of departure for metamorphosis. All of existence reflects the dynamic conception of divine life and the dialectical tension between manifestation and concealment, emanation and withdrawal, transcendence and immanence. All expresses the continuum of opposites between the divine will to be manifest in the *yesh* and the divine tendency to restore that *yesh* to its potential situation and to annihilate it.
>
> *Rachel Elior, Paradoxical Ascent to God, PAGH p.127*

Concerning the actual experience of this unification:

> All the dimensions that define individual consciousness are erased and nullified during the various stages of annihilation: the extinguishing of consciousness and the abnegation of existence by means of nullifying (individual) consciousness; as well as the nullification of the will and

> the eradication of reflective consciousness, opening the way for a mystical union with God. At the peak of this union a person no longer exists as a separate being and his essence flows into the Divinity and is included within it in ecstatic enthusiasm.
>
> *Rachel Elior, Paradoxical Ascent to God, PAGH p.187*

In his *Kuntres ha-Hitpaʿalut* ('Tract on Ecstasy'), one of the most explicit documents in Jewish literature concerning mystical practice, Rabbi Dov Baer Schneerson explains that the aspiring mystic needs to surrender every aspect of his individuality:

> Therefore, all his (the mystic practitioner's) wilful intentions that concern something separate from his true substance … are regarded as naught. For they are absorbed within the substance of that Will which concerns his whole substance. This is called 'ecstasy of the whole essence'.... That is to say, his whole being is so absorbed that nothing remains of it at all, and then he has no self-consciousness whatsoever.... And from that delight, the simple pleasure of the (divine) Will is revealed, for that Will causes the soul to ascend, to be absorbed absolutely in the substance of the infinite Light, and all the substance of the soul is absorbed and is bound up within it,... (such) that the entire soul is absorbed truly within the Lord.
>
> *Rabbi Dov Baer Schneerson, Kuntres ha-Hitpaʿalut, KHDB fol.55a–b; cf. in PAGH p.187*

Elior goes on to cite a number of passages in which Rabbi Shneur Zalman describes this mystical union as the peak of spiritual worship. These descriptions are typical of statements found throughout *Ḥabad* literature:

> With a powerful simile, Rabbi Shneur Zalman describes the moment of the mystical union as being swallowed up within the Divinity: "And this is the true cleaving *(devekut),* as one becomes indistinct within the Divinity, into whom he has been inseparably swallowed. One is unable to be considered as a distinct entity at all, and this is truly 'you shall cleave unto Him.'"[2]... "And this is the matter of being swallowed up and absorbed within the substance of the Infinite."[3] The terms commonly used to express the mystical union are: "to cleave to Him, blessed be He, and to be absorbed in the aspect of His essence and substance,... to be drawn into the body of the King, which is His essence and substance ... which unites absolutely with His blessed essence and substance;"[4] or "being poured into the true bosom of its Father to be truly nothing and naught".[5] Usually these states are presented as the yearned for and ecstatic result of contemplative study, which is followed by

> "nullification of (individual) consciousness". "Ecstatic enthusiasm" is the result of the effort to struggle against the bounds of consciousness and to break through them "beyond reason and knowledge".
>
> *Rachel Elior, Paradoxical Ascent to God, PAGH p.188*

Rabbi Shneur Zalman describes this transition in his classic *Tanya* ('We Have Learned'):

> When the intelligent person will reflect on these matters in the depths of his heart and brain, then … his soul will spontaneously be kindled … willingly to lay down and resolutely to abandon all he possesses in order only to cleave unto Him, may He be blessed, and be absorbed into His light with an attachment and longing and desire in a manner of 'kissing' and the attachment of spirit to spirit.
>
> *Rabbi Shneur Zalman, Tanya, LASZ p.139, in PAGH p.188*

And he clarifies what he means by "kissing":

> Through contemplation of the blessed Infinite, … the soul is kindled and flares up toward the glory of the splendour of His greatness … like glowing coals of a mighty flame which surges upwards, … and then it reaches a state of very rapture of the soul.
>
> *Rabbi Shneur Zalman, Tanya, LASZ p.140, in PAGH p.188*

Another significant kabbalist and rabbi of the *Ḥabad* Hasidic lineage was Rabbi Aharon Halevi Horowitz of Staroselye, a direct disciple of Rabbi Shneur Zalman. Rabbi Aharon has left as his legacy some of the most lucid teachings concerning *aḥdut hashva´ah.* He explains that the duality of opposites in the creation are resolved in the divine unity, which restores the primal equanimity and balance ("equalization"):

> All the worlds in all their details are included in the power of His equalization *(hashva´ah).*
>
> *Aharon Halevi Horowitz, Sha'arei ha-'Avodah 4:22, SAAH, in PAGH p.69*

And:

> And this is His blessed power, which in the aspect of his equalization *(hashva´ah)* and the power of His blessed perfection includes all the diversities of the world in a single power and in utter equalization *(hashva´ah).*
>
> *Aharon Halevi Horowitz, Sha'arei ha-Yiḥud ve-ha-Emunah 2:14, SYEA, in PAGH p.69*

According to Rabbi Aharon, Unity means the equalization or unification of the two opposites – something or being *(yesh)* and nothing or nonbeing *(ayin).* The desire for union is the underlying principle of all worship:

> Before Him, blessed be He, who is omnipotent, the *yesh* and the *ayin* are equal, because before Him, blessed be He, heaven and earth are called as one, for the *yesh* and the *ayin* are absolutely equal.
>
> *Aharon Halevi Horowitz, ʿAvodat ha-Levi 1, ALAH fol.1a, in PAGH p.239 (n.5)*

Rabbi Aharon is saying that *within* the divine *Ayn-Sof,* the elements of the creation that are most 'opposed' are resolved, reconciled, unified, or equalized – even those of being and nonbeing. This is mirrored in the culmination of the devotee's worship through faith and mystic realization ("revelation"), rather than intellectual knowledge or reason:

> According to (human) knowledge, they are two opposites, which appear, through His blessed power, as the inversion, the other, and that which is separate.... (But) this revelation (of unity) is the opposite of knowledge. Were it knowledge, it would recognize that there is nothing besides Him, blessed be He.... But the essential annihilation of the worlds in Him takes place through faith. That is, that everything comes from His blessed power; but how this is, according to understanding and knowledge, is not comprehended. On the contrary, it is the opposite of knowledge, coming only through revelation. In truth, it is higher than knowledge and intellect and understanding, since the Infinite, blessed be He, cannot be grasped through intellectual understanding and He is beyond reason. Only that which transcends the intellect can maintain two opposites in a single subject.
>
> *Aharon Halevi Horowitz, Shaʿarei ha-ʿAvodah 3:19, SAAH, in PAGH pp.179–80*

The purpose of life, according to Rabbi Aharon, is for each individual to struggle against the limitations of human comprehension in order to reach true inner knowledge of the divine unity:

> For the entire essence of knowledge is to know His blessed unity, and the knowledge of His blessed unity is not (humanly) comprehensible, for the category of unification transcends understanding. Hence it is rather an apprehension and a feeling of His blessed unity in the divine soul of every individual,... in its root, which is above all wisdom and understanding. Through their transcendent root they have the power to grasp His blessed unity in their souls, and this is called (true) knowledge.
>
> *Aharon Halevi Horowitz, Shaʿarei ha-Yiḥud ve-ha-Emunah, Introduction, SYEA, in PAGH p.181*

See also: **devekut**, **yiḥud**.

1. Gershom Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah, OKGS* pp.441–42.
2. Rabbi Shneur Zalman, *Seder Tefilot mi-Kol ha-Shanah, STKS* fol.26a.
3. Rabbi Shneur Zalman, *Seder Tefilot mi-Kol ha-Shanah, STKS* fol. 39a.
4. Rabbi Shneur Zalman, *Torah Or, TOSZ* pp.17–18.
5. Rabbi Shneur Zalman, *Torah Or, TOSZ* p.90.

akakū (Hw) *Lit.* standing *(kū)* shadow *(aka),* stationary shadow; a vision, to see a vision; in the native Hawaiian tradition, a visionary experience, a trance, a hallucination, a reflection (as in a mirror); a vision as opposed to a dream *(moe ʻuhane).*

An *akakū* vision can be seen in daylight, when completely awake. In many instances, deceased grandparents or parents appear to the living and advise them to correct their ways or to offer other advice, as two case studies report:

> I was just taking it easy. It was broad daylight – about two in the afternoon – and I was wide awake. All of a sudden, my father (dead ten years) came up and spoke to me. He told me to straighten up. Make a man of myself. . . .
>
> Every time my husband and I quarrel, grandfather comes to me. He beckons me. Tells me to come to him. But my husband holds me back, so I can't go.
>
> *Nānā I Ke Kumu, NKK1 p.11*

This vision has the appearance of being completely real, the ancestor is generally pleasant, and fear does not arise from these encounters. Meeting spirit ancestors in this way is considered normal. Both the vision and the message bring solace and comfort. Sometimes, a *kahuna* may be consulted to interpret the encounter.

ākāsānañcāyatana (Pa) *Lit.* realm *(āyatana)* of boundless *(ananta)* space *(ākāsa);* first of the four immaterial or formless realms or divisions *(arūpāyatana)* of the formless or immaterial world *(arūpaloka);* a Buddhist term. The *arūpāyatanas* are also known as the *arūpa-jhānas* (formless or immaterial meditative absorptions), thus emphasizing the point that transcendental realms can also be understood as stages in meditation. See **arūpāyatana** (8.5).

akhdh (A), **akhź** (P) *Lit.* taking away, seizure; being carried away in ecstasy and rapture; also, being called to account. Rūzbihān explains:

> Those who experience yearning during ardent and sincere meditation face the danger of being called to account *(akhdh)* if they become subject to blameworthy thoughts. Every thought that points to something other than God causes veiling. If one who yearns for God does not drive away such thoughts with determined effort, he will be called to account *(ma'khūdh)* for it. According to the *Qur'ān:* "Whether you reveal what is within your *nafs* or hide it, God will bring you to account *(yuḥāsibukum)* for it."[1] This accounting *(akhdh)* involves chastisement of the heart, but prepares it for the state of yearning.
>
> The term, *akhdh,* has another meaning which is when the light of rapture manifests in the devotee's heart, and with its sweetness and subtlety, takes him out of the state of dispersion. This is a stage of yearning that happens to the Perfect. When ecstasy and joy overcome a devotee, he is said to be taken away *(ma'khūdh),* this being the final phase of the station of attraction. Being taken away *(akhdh)* is more complete than deprival.
>
> *Rūzbihān, Mashrab al-Arwāḥ 6:39, MARB p.125; cf. in SSE10 p.128*

And again:

> Being taken away *(akhẕ)* means God's attraction of the lover's being and His casting it into the wellsprings of eternity, so that he becomes stupefied, languid, and numb.
>
> *Rūzbihān, Sharḥ-i Shaṭḥiyāt 383:1070, CPS p.555; cf. in SSE10 pp.127–28*

1. *Qur'ān* 2:284.

ākiñcañ̃ñāyatana (Pa) *Lit.* realm *(āyatana)* of no-thingness *(ākiñcañ̃ña);* third of the four immaterial or formless realms or divisions *(arūpāyatana)* of the formless or immaterial world *(arūpaloka),* according to Buddhist cosmology. The *arūpāyatanas* are also known as the *arūpa-jhānas* (formless or immaterial meditative absorptions), thus emphasizing the point that the transcendental realms can also be understood as stages in meditation. See **arūpāyatana** (8.5).

alaukika pratyaksha (S) *Lit.* not *(a)* ordinary *(laukika)* perception *(pratyaksha). Alaukika* means not mundane, uncommon, unusual, strange; extra-ordinary, not of this world, transcendent, unworldly; supernatural, supra-mundane; recondite, esoteric, occult, arcane; neither comprehensible to the physical senses nor to reasoning founded upon their perceptions. On its own, *alaukika* describes mystical or spiritual experience and understanding.

Alaukika pratyaksha is a term from the *Nyāya* school of Indian philosophy, which is essentially a logical study of the nature of knowledge (*i.e.* epistemology). According to *Nyāya,* there are only two forms of perception. One is *laukika pratyaksha* (ordinary perception), which refers to perception through the five sense organs and by the mind. The other is extra-ordinary perception *(alaukika pratyaksha),* which is of three kinds.

The first is *sāmānya-lakshaṇa* (generic attribute), which is the perceptive ability to move from the particular to the general, just as one might see an apple, and understand it to belong to a class of something more general, such as a fruit, or a plant product, and so on. It is a natural and essential function of the mind to classify things or put them into categories. For example, a person might encounter something he has never previously experienced, but through the categorizing aspect of mental perception, by comparing it with previous experiences, he immediately knows something about it and acts accordingly. Supposing he were to encounter a wild animal he had never seen before. From its physical appearance and behaviour, he might be able to assess whether it fell into the category of dangerous or harmless.

The second kind of extra-ordinary perception is *jñāna-lakshaṇa* (knowledge attribute), which is the ability to perceive in an object something that is not immediately apparent to the senses. This again draws on previous experience. One might, for instance, see an apple and infer that it would be sweet.

The third kind of extra-ordinary perception is *yogaja* (arising from *yoga*). This refers to supernatural yogic powers arising from the practice of *yoga* by which a person may perceive things not accessible to the senses or ordinary mental function, such as the past, present and future, or the content of another person's thoughts and emotions through mental telepathy, and so on.

ālaya-vijñāna (S), **ālaya-viññāṇa** (Pa), **kun gzhi rnam par shes pa** (T), **ālàiyēshí**, **zàngshí** (C), **arayashiki**, **zōshiki** (J) *Lit.* abode *(ālaya)* of consciousness *(vijñāna, rnam par shes, shí, shiki);* receptacle, storehouse *(zàng),* or foundation *(kun gzhi)* of consciousness; a key concept developed in the *Yogāchāra* school of Buddhism, also called *Vijñānavāda,* which is traditionally believed to have been co-founded by the Buddhist monks and scholars Asanga and his half-brother Vasubandhu during the fourth and fifth centuries CE; also called *āshraya* (basis, foundation, support) in some Sanskrit texts. In Tibetan Buddhism, *ālaya* on its own means 'ground of being'. *Ālaya* is also used as a synonym of *tṛishṇā* (desire, craving, clinging).

According to *Yogāchāra* epistemology, consciousness has eight aspects. Five are comprised of the mental component of the five senses – that aspect of sensory perception which is a part of consciousness; the sixth component *(mano-vijñāna)* is that part of the mind which processes sensory input; the seventh is that of the afflicted or contaminated mind *(klishṭa-manas),*

which perceives the *ālaya-vijñāna* that gives it its existence, but mistakenly understands it to be an individual self. The eighth and fundamental component, *ālaya-vijñāna,* is the foundational framework within which the other aspects of seemingly personal consciousness exist. *Ālaya-vijñāna* provides the continuum of consciousness from one moment to another both in this life and between one lifetime and the next. It is like a stream of water that continuously renews itself and in which the other seven aspects of consciousness manifest. It is the karmically neutral receptacle for memories, thoughts and desires, where impressions *(vāsanā)* or seeds *(bīja)* of past experiences and *karmas* are stored as potentialities until ready to bear fruit. For this reason, *ālaya-vijñāna* is also known as *sarvabīja-vijñāna* (all-seeds consciousness).

According to this concept, at the time of death the *ālaya-vijñāna* retains the individual's full karmic record. The seeds and impressions stored in the *ālaya-vijñāna* are then manifested as the resulting destiny of the subsequent rebirth. As the seeds and impressions manifest, they give rise to the mistaken perception of an external reality and a sense of individual identity – illusions to which all unenlightened beings are continually subject. When karmic seeds bear fruit they simultaneously generate the illusion of the perceiver and the perceived – a moment of personal consciousness and an apparent object of the senses. The perceiver is thus led to believe, quite incorrectly, that he exists as an individual that is separate from his experiences. What appears to be reality is comprised of mind only *(chitta-mātra)* – of a seamless sequence of 'consciousness moments' or 'consciousness events', possessing no independent reality.

The object that is apparently perceived as something separate, but in fact exists only in the mind, is termed the *nimitta-bhāga* (image part) or the *grāhya* (grasped); the perception itself is termed the *darshana-bhāga* (perceiving part) or *grāhaka* (grasper); and awareness that perception has taken place is termed the *svasaṃvitti-bhāga* (self-witnessing part). The reactions of the 'perceiver' to the 'experience', whether positive, negative or neutral, form further seeds or impressions in the *ālaya-vijñāna,* where they remain until they themselves bear fruit. According to *Yogāchāra,* therefore, the material 'world' is a projection or manifestation of the mind, devoid of any intrinsic reality.

The notion is used to account for a number of phenomena that are otherwise difficult to comprehend. It presents a conceptual framework that can be used to understand how a meditator can enter a state of meditative absorption which includes the cessation *(nirodha)* of all internal movements of mind and consciousness (*i.e. citta* and *chaitta* – all mind and mental factors), and yet can rise from meditation as the same individual with all *karma,* impressions, personality, and so on intact. The impressions that manifest as individuality remain in the *ālaya-vijñāna,* resurfacing when the meditator returns to normal consciousness. The concept also explains how a sentient being, who – according to Buddhist philosophy – has no enduring personal identity, can carry

individual *karma* and impressions from one life to another. It describes how the tendencies of one life – whether spiritual or otherwise – can be carried forward into the next, and how spiritual progress made in one lifetime is not lost or dissolved at the time of death, but is retained and able to remanifest in the next. It provides a way of understanding how impure states of mind can be absent from the conscious mind, yet can still be present – as latent seeds in the *ālaya-vijñāna* – awaiting conditions that encourage their re-emergence.

Some *Mahāyāna* schools believed that the *buddha*-nature of all sentient beings is inherently enlightened, which raises the question of how their minds became impure and lost that state in the first place. The concept of *ālaya-vijñāna* provides a partial explanation – the innate enlightenment is obscured by the seeds and impressions that are stored in and manifest from the *ālaya-vijñāna.* Discussion remained, however, about whether the *ālaya-vijñāna* was inherently impure because of the stored seeds and impressions or whether it was both pure and impure. *Vāsanā* literally means 'fragrance', and according to one way of thinking, just as the smell of incense or sandalwood can impart its fragrance to nearby garments, but is not an intrinsic part of the garment, so too can the *ālaya-vijñāna* be returned to its original, pristine condition. The schools also discussed whether there was any difference between *vāsanās* and *bījas* in their effect upon the *ālaya-vijñāna.*

Conceptual and analytical considerations aside, the practical problem remains of how to eradicate the countless multitude of impressions and seeds of *karma* that have been accumulating for millions of lifetimes. According to *Yogāchāra,* this is attained by *āshraya-parāvṛitti* (transformation of the foundation), a sudden reversal of direction within the contaminated mind *(klishṭa-manas),* which results in the elimination of all the seeds and impressions, thereby freeing the aspiring *bodhisattva* from all past *karmas* and impressions. A later elaboration of the concept by Paramārtha (499–569) – a *Yogāchāra* Buddhist monk and prolific translator of texts into Chinese, including Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakosha* – describes this purified *ālaya-vijñāna* as a ninth 'immaculate consciousness *(amala-vijñāna)*'.

Enlightenment is thus understood to be the realization that all things are manifestations of this underlying consciousness – that they consist of nothing but consciousness. This results in the elimination of the dualism of perceiver and perceived, of a self that is separate from all else, and of the perception that phenomena have any separate identity of their own. When enlightenment is attained, the *ālaya-vijñāna* is transformed into or replaced by a *buddha*'s perfect 'mirror-like awareness *(ādarsha-jñāna)*' in which everything is reflected as it truly is, without bias, prejudice, or personal perspective. This essential or intrinsic nature, which is present with every sentient being, is also called the *buddhadhātu* (*buddha* element, *buddha* principle) or *tathāgata-garbha* (embryo of buddhahood), which are both loosely referred to as the inherent *buddha*-nature.

The *ālaya-vijñāna* is an essential aspect of the *trisvabhāva* (three natures) concept, a central feature of *Yogāchāra* doctrine. The three natures are primary aspects of all phenomena. The first nature, *parikalpita* (fabricated, imaginary) points to the incorrect perception that there is a separate self that perceives objects as independent of the consciousness in which they exist. The second nature, *paratantra* (other-powered, dependent) indicates that things are causally dependent upon other things for their apparent existence. The third nature, *parinishpanna* (consummate, perfected) is the real nature of things – the absence of any distinction between the perceiving consciousness and the objects perceived.

The concept of *ālaya-vijñāna* receives its most elaborate presentation in Vasubandhu's *Triṃshikā-vijñapti-mātratā* ('Thirty Verses on Consciousness Only') and Dharmapāla's (490–570) commentary on this work, the *Vijñapti-mātratā-siddhi Shāstra.* In India, the theory remained controversial, with critics arguing that the existing conceptual frameworks of Buddhism were sufficient to explain the seeming difficulties addressed by the notion of the *ālaya-vijñāna.* It was also rejected on the grounds that the *ālaya-vijñāna* posited the existence of a permanent self – a heretical concept in Buddhist thinking. Even within the *Yogāchāra* tradition, the theories of Asanga and Vasubandhu concerning the eight consciousnesses were not universally accepted.

In China, the *ālaya-vijñāna* doctrine was particularly influential in schools such as the *Fǎ Xiāng,* which also teaches that everything is an evolution of consciousness. From China, the philosophy spread to other Far Eastern Buddhist schools.

See also: **amala-vijñāna**, **āshraya-parāvṛitti**, **bhavanga**, **trisvabhāva** (▸1).

ʿ**aliyah**, ʿ**aliyat neshamah** (He) *Lit.* ascent *(ʿaliyat)* of the soul *(neshamah);* the rise of the soul towards God; the spiritual journey of the soul; also, in Hasidism, the zeal and enthusiasm that propels the soul in its efforts to experience communion with the Divine; in modern times, travelling to Israel from the diaspora in order to settle there.

According to *2 Kings,* the prophet Elijah "ascended" to heaven:

> And it came to pass, as they still went on and talked that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and separated them one from the other; and Elijah ascended *(va-yaʿal)* by a whirlwind to heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and its horsemen."
>
> *2 Kings 2:11, 12; cf. JCL*

The prophet Elijah's ascent to the heavens while alive gave rise to the belief among Jews that he was a true holy man who never experienced death, but united with God. He is understood as a guide and protector in this life and the next; as the intermediary with God who will accompany the messiah; and as the one who will intercede on the supplicant's behalf in the heavenly realms. Consequently, throughout the centuries, there have been numerous invocations to Elijah in the liturgy and the writings of kabbalists.

On the festival of Passover, an extra place is normally set at the dining table for Elijah, who is believed to enter the home unseen, invisible, and take a sip from a large cup of wine that represents salvation and liberation. A hymn is sung, with the refrain: "Elijah the prophet, Elijah the Tishbite, Elijah the Giladite – in haste and in our days may he come to us with the messiah, son of David." The song is based on a passage in *1 Kings,*[1] and is sung during the ritual 'opening of the door for Elijah'. It is also part of the traditional Saturday night prayer service. It concludes with: "Happy is he who has seen Elijah's face in a dream."

ʿAliyah, meaning zeal for spiritual life, is contrasted with *yeridah* (descent, depression), in which the soul experiences dry periods or 'fallen states' where spiritual enthusiasm is lost and the aspirant has difficulty making spiritual effort. Such periods of *ʿaliyah* followed by *yeridah* are said to have been experienced by the first Hasidic master, the Baʿal Shem Tov, during his time as a master, following which his powers of *ʿaliyah* are said to have doubled.[2] The Baʿal Shem Tov is quoted by Yaʿakov Yosef of Polnoy (*d.*1783) as having said:

> A delight that is perpetual becomes a habit and ceases to be a delight; therefore, there are rises and falls in a man's worship of the blessed Lord so that he will have the delight which is the main purpose of worshipping the blessed Lord.
>
> *Baʿal Shem Tov, Keter Shem Tov 121, KSTY p.16a, in BMME p.131*

Immanuel Etkes, a translator of the Baʿal Shem Tov, describes these periods of spiritual expansion and contraction by reference to the notion of "greatness *(gadlut)*" and "smallness *(katnut)*" in spiritual life:

> The dialectic of rising and falling that occurs in divine worship … is also suggested by the concepts of 'greatness' and 'smallness'.… The concepts of 'greatness' and 'smallness' thus reflect two basic spiritual states. 'Greatness' is the mystic's supreme sense that the gates of heaven are opening before him and he is succeeding in rising and realizing his yearnings for unmediated contact with the Divinity. 'Smallness', by contrast, denotes the sense of disappointment and helplessness of one who has failed in his efforts to free himself of the shackles of material existence.
>
> *Immanuel Etkes, The Besht, BMME p.132*

See also: **ascent of the soul**, **gadlut de moḥin**.

1. *1 Kings* 17:1.
2. See *e.g.* Immanuel Etkes, *The Besht, BMME* pp.131–35.

alone with God The inner solitude and peace in which one's inner being recognizes that the Divine is the only true companion in life; the inner space where being relates to Being, which is a true relationship. Hence, Juan de los Angeles writes of the "intimate and secret places of the soul wherein a man may hold converse alone with God".[1]

It is in this inner place of refuge and solitude that God is to be found. François de Sales counsels:

> Remember to retire often … into the solitude of your heart while you are outwardly engaged in work or with others. This spiritual solitude can be preserved no matter how many people there are about you, for they are only about your body and not about your heart, which can remain all alone with God. This is what David practised in the midst of his various occupations. As he says so often in his psalms: "O Lord, I am continually with You;"[2] "I always keep the Lord before me;"[3] "I lift up my eyes unto You: unto You who dwells in the heavens;"[4] and, "My eyes are continually on the Lord."[5]
>
> In any case, our work is rarely so serious that we cannot now and then stand aside from it, and enter this place of divine solitude. When St Catherine of Siena's parents deprived her of the time and place for prayer and meditation, our Lord inspired her to make her soul a shrine to which she could retire with Him in spirit, in the midst of her exterior occupations. Worldly criticism caused her no inconvenience for the same reason; she merely shut herself in this interior shrine, she said, and found consolation with her heavenly Spouse. After this she always advised her followers to make a shrine of their own hearts in which to dwell.
>
> *François de Sales, Devout Life 2:12; cf. IDL p.66*

In a similar vein, the thirteenth-century Beguine, Hadewijch writes:

> Those who are with you help you little;
> Thus it is left for you to live alone with God:
> With Him you will fare the best.
> If you wish to live free and valiant,
> and to make progress in Him at all times,

turn all your ardour upon Him,
and consider and learn, in all knowledge,
the storms of veritable love.
Hadewijch, Alone with God 7–14, HCW p.329

See also: **solitude** (8.5).

1. Juan de los Angeles, *Conquest of the Kingdom of God* 10:3, in *NBA1* p.143, in *SSM1* p.304.
2. *Psalms* 73:23.
3. *Psalms* 16:8.
4. *Psalms* 123:1.
5. *Psalms* 25:15.

amala-vijñāna (S), **dri ma med pa'i rnam shes** (T), **āmóluó shí**, **wúgòu shí** (C), **amarashiki**, **mukushiki** (J) *Lit.* without *(a, med pa, wú)* taint *(mala, dri ma)* consciousness *(vijñāna, rnam shes, shí, shiki);* spotless, pure, unsullied, or immaculate consciousness; the ninth aspect of consciousness according to the thinking of Paramārtha (499–569), a *Yogāchāra* Buddhist monk and prolific translator of texts into Chinese, including Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakosha* and *Triṃshikā-vijñapti-mātratā* ('Thirty Verses on Consciousness Only').

According to Vasubandhu, who is regarded as one of the fourth- and fifth-century founders of the *Yogāchāra* school, consciousness has eight aspects. The eighth and fundamental component, *ālaya-vijñāna,* is the foundational framework within which the other aspects of personal consciousness exist. The seventh is that of the afflicted or contaminated mind *(klishṭa-manas),* which perceives the *ālaya-vijñāna* that gives it its existence, but mistakenly understands it to be an individual self. The sixth *(mano-vijñāna)* is that part of the mind which processes sensory input. The lowest five are comprised of the mental component of the five senses – that aspect of sensory perception which is a part of consciousness.

Enlightenment takes place by *āshraya-parāvṛitti* (transformation of the foundation) – a sudden reversal of direction within the contaminated mind *(klishṭa-manas)* that is said to result in the elimination of all karmic seeds and impressions from the *ālaya-vijñāna.* Paramārtha's later elaboration of this concept portrayed the *ālaya-vijñāna* as innately impure, positing instead a ninth 'immaculate consciousness *(amala-vijñāna)*' as the ultimate state of an enlightened consciousness.

Paramārtha's translations into Chinese are characterized by long commentaries in which he presents his own ideas. Indeed, by comparing Paramārtha's translations with others, it seems that even his translations are coloured by

his own concepts. Paramārtha's intention seems to have been a merging of the *Mahāyāna* notion of *tathāgata-garbha* (embryo of buddhahood) with the eight-consciousness philosophy of *Yogāchāra* by the addition of the *amala-vijñāna* concept. *Tathāgata-garbha* refers to the innate *buddha*-nature, the inherently pure nature of mind that is understood to be present within every inanimate object and every sentient being, realization of which is obscured by imperfection.

Paramārtha also equated *amala-vijñāna* with consciousness of *Tathatā* (Thusness, Suchness), which is the nature of ultimate Reality and another belief central to the *Mahāyāna* tradition. Additionally, he associated *amala-vijñāna* with *parinishpanna-svabhāva* (consummate or perfected nature), which is the nature of Reality – according to the *Yogāchāra trisvabhāva* (three natures) concept – in which there is no distinction between the consciousness of the perceiver and the objects perceived. Seeing the similarities between the two doctrines, and seeking to present just one description of Reality, Paramārtha thus combined some of the key concepts of *Yogāchāra* with the *Mahāyāna tathāgata-garbha* teachings.

The introduction of the eight- and nine-consciousness systems, together with the *tathāgata-garbha* doctrine, proved popular in Chinese and other East Asian Buddhist traditions, with the formation of various schools and sub-schools according to their founders' beliefs in the several variants of the philosophy. Ultimately, however, there can be only one absolute Reality, and descriptions of it will always prove inadequate. There is a fundamental difference between verbal descriptions and direct personal experience, notwithstanding the many concepts and theories promoted by the intellectually minded.

See also: **ālaya-vijñāna**, **āshraya-parāvṛitti**, **tathāgata-garbha** (▸1), **trisvabhāva** (▸1).

ameretatāt (Av), **amardād** (Pv) *Lit.* deathlessness, immortality; eternal life; a state of immortal bliss; one of the six *Ameshā Spentās,* the six primary aspects or qualities of *Ahura Mazdā;* cognate with the Sanskrit, *amṛitatā* (immortality). In later Zoroastrianism, *Ameretatāt* is personified as a deity, the guardian of plants and trees.

In Zarathushtra's *Gāthās* and in later Zoroastrian literature, *ameretatāt* is twinned with *haurvatāt* (perfection, wholeness). Known as the twin powers because the one is a part of the other, they are regarded as the spiritual fruits of life, by which the soul partakes of the qualities of God, becoming one with Him. They are the equivalent of salvation, God-realization, or the highest degree of spiritual enlightenment. Zarathushtra describes them as twin gifts of God's eternal blessing:

Show me clearly, O *Mazdā,* my final goal and purpose,
which, through Your First Mind *(Vohu Manah),* I would pursue:
To worship You – and him who's like You.
Accept my words of praise inspired by Truth *(Asha),*
and grant me also Your everlasting blessing
of immortality *(ameretatāt)* and perfection *(haurvatāt).*

Zarathushtra, Yasna 33:8; cf. DSZ, GHSZ, GHZI

Therefore, he prays:

Grant me, O *Mazdā,*
creator of the earth, the waters and the plants,
perfection *(haurvatāt)* and immortality *(ameretatāt),*
through Your most Holy Spirit.
Grant me spiritual strength *(tevīshī)* and life eternal *(utayūitī),*
through Your First Mind *(Vohu Manah),* as You have taught.

Zarathushtra, Yasna 51:7; cf. DSZ

See also: **haurvatāt**, **tevīshī** (▸4), **utayūitī** (▸4).

amṛit(a) (S/H), **amata** (Pa), **amrit** (Pu), **amī** (H/Pu), **'chi med**, **bdud rtsi** (T), **gānlù** (C), **kanro** (J) *Lit.* not *(a)* dead *(mṛita);* immortal, undying, deathless; deathlessness, immortality; the immortality of the soul or true self, implying spiritual enlightenment and liberation; hence, the nectar of the gods and the food of the gods (Gk. *ambrosia*), which confer immortality; in the *haṭha yoga* and tantric traditions, the exquisitely blissful 'nectar' that descends from a subtle centre in the head; a metaphor used extensively by Indian *sants* for the divine creative power; thus, the divine Nectar, Water of Immortality, Water of Life, Immortal Draught, Elixir of Life, *etc.;* in Buddhism, synonymous with or an epithet of *nirvāṇa* (Pa. *nibbāna*), the deathless state and the end of the cycle of birth and death *(saṃsāra);* a simile for the *buddhadharma* (teachings and path of the Buddha); also, the five divine foods *(pañchāmṛita)* of Ayurvedic medicine *viz.* milk, ghee, curd, honey and sugar, taken together; also, any sweet food, such as milk and honey.

In the *Upanishads, amṛita* is the ultimate spiritual goal, the pure, liberated and naturally immortal state of the soul, the highest aspiration of the soul *(ātman).* According to the well-known invocation in the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad:*

From the unreal *(asat),*
lead me to the Real *(Sat);*

From darkness *(tamas),*
lead me to light *(jyoti);*
From death *(mṛityu),*
lead me to immortality *(amṛita).*

Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad 1:3.28

Likewise, in the *Aitareya Upanishad,* speaking of the Vedic Ṛishi Vāmadeva, who – according to the legend – received enlightenment while still in his mother's womb:

> Thus endowed with knowledge, after dissolution of the body, he soared aloft, attained all desires in the heavenly world, and became immortal *(amṛita),* became immortal.
>
> *Aitareya Upanishad 2:6*

In *haṭha yoga* and tantric traditions, *amṛita* is understood as a nectar that descends from the *chandra* (moon), the name of a subtle energy centre that is variously located by different texts. The *Kaula-jñāna-nirṇaya*[1] has it in the head, while the *Shiva Saṃhitā*[2] places it more specifically at the top of the spinal cord. The *Yogashikhā Upanishad*[3] and the *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā*[4] have it at the "root of the palate". In the majority of people, the nectar is said to trickle down to the abdominal region where it is consumed by the *sūrya* (sun), a metaphorical reference to the digestive 'fire' associated with the navel *chakra.* The imagery refers to the flow of *prāṇa,* the subtle life energy. Yogic postures that invert the body, such as the shoulder and head stands, as well as certain *bandhas* (locks) and *mudrās* (postures), such as *jālandhara-bandha* (water-pipe lock) and the *khecharī-mudrā,* are said to reverse or block the downward flow of the *amṛita* so that the yogi may enjoy its intoxicating effect.[5] Speaking of the *khecharī-mudrā,* in which an artificially elongated tongue is turned backwards into the pharyngeal cavity, the *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā* says:

> The *amara-vāruṇī* (immortal nectar) is the flow of nectar that is secreted by the moon *(chandra)* due to the heat generated by the insertion of the tongue (into the pharyngeal cavity).
>
> The blazing sun resides in the navel region, while the moon that secretes the nectar *(amṛita)* is always located in the palate. Facing downwards, the moon showers the nectar. The sun, facing upwards, absorbs it. Therefore, the technique of preserving the nectar should be learnt.
>
> One should stabilize the flow of nectar *(amṛita)* from the moon in the supreme *chakra* of *vishuddha,* located in the neck, in the cavity at the root of the nose.
>
> *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā 5:69–72; cf. HSYB pp.129–31*

As a term for the divine creative power, *Amī* or *Amrit* is said to confer immortality:

> Poison and nectar *(amṛit)* are both found within,
> but only a rare one knows it.
> Those who took the poison, died;
> Those who drank the Draught of Immortality *(Amī)*
> became immortal.
>
> *Dādū, Bānī 1, Sajīvan 21, DDB1 p.213*

It brings the soul into contact with God:

> I have drunk the divine Nectar *(Amī)* to my fill:
> now, every moment, I behold the Lord.
>
> *Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 34:2.13, SBP p.282*

Amrit is the spiritual sweetness of the *Shabd* (Word), another term for the creative power. Its purifying effect quells the fire of the "thieves" of human imperfections that otherwise plunder the spiritual treasure that lies within the "home" of the human body:

> I see the uniqueness
> of the path revealed by the master *(guru)*
> as my mind *(man)* and soul *(surat)* make contact with *Shabd.*
> I see a great spectacle *(līlā)* within
> and my soul collects nectar from the inner sky *(gagan)*
> as easily as a maiden gets water from the village spring.
>
> I have drunk this nectar *(amrit ras)* to my heart's content,
> thoroughly soothing my body and mind.
> The thieves have stopped their plundering,
> they find themselves on fire.
> The real owner of the home is now awake within,
> with the merciful *Shabd* standing guard.
>
> *Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 5:4.1–5, SBP p.46; cf. SBPS pp.26–27*

Amrit rains unceasingly, destroying the ego and human imperfection, and immersing the soul in divine love:

> The Lord's Nectar *(Amrit)* ever rains:
> the man of wisdom alone understands this thing.
> He who, by the *guru*'s grace, realizes this,
> keeps the Lord's Nectar *(Amrit)* enshrined in his mind.

They who still their ego and desire,
ever in-drink the Lord's Nectar *(Amrit),*
and remain imbued with His love.
Guru Amardās, Ādi Granth 1281, MMS

In Buddhism, *amṛita* and *amata* are common terms, used to mean both 'immortal' and 'nectar of immortality'. In tantric Buddhism, the celestial Buddha Amitābha (S. 'Buddha of Infinite Light') is also called Buddha Amitāyus (S. 'Buddha of Boundless Life') and Amṛitarāja ('Nectar King', 'Deathless King'), and is commonly depicted holding a full bowl of *amṛita* in his lap.

In the ritualistic practices of Tibetan *anuttara-yoga tantra,* offerings of five kinds of *amṛita* (*pañcha-amṛita:* excrement, urine, blood, semen, and brains) are made to the *maṇḍala* deities. In the *Mahāyāna* purification practices associated with the *bodhisattva* Vajrasattva, a practitioner visualizes Vajrasattva and his consort Vajratopa in union above his head. Light and nectar *(amṛita)* emanate from them, flowing down over his head and his whole body. This induces his bodily impurities *(kleshas)* to leave through the lower apertures. Similarly, impurities of speech are visualized as light and nectar filling the body from the feet upwards, with the impurities leaving through the upper orifices of the mouth, nose, eyes, and ears. Vajrasattva is often visualized in union with Vajratopa, who holds a curved knife (S. *kartṛikā*) in her right hand while her left hand holds a skull cup (S. *kapāla*) filled with *amṛita.*

In the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra,* where *amṛita* as the nectar of immortality receives frequent mention, the Buddha explains to Kāshyapa, his foremost disciple, how the *vaipulya sūtras* (the principal *Mahāyāna sūtras* such as the *Lotus Sūtra, Avataṃsaka Sūtra, Lankāvatāra Sūtra,* the *Heart Sūtra, etc.*) can serve as nectar or poison depending on the attitude and purity of the receiver. In this context, *amṛita* is also understood as "wisdom":

(The Buddha said), . . . "O good man, the *vaipulya sūtras* are like *amṛita* and poison." Bodhisattva Kāshyapa said to the Buddha: "Why, O Tathāgata, do you say that the *vaipulya sūtras* are both *amṛita* and poison?" . . . The Tathāgata then spoke in a *gāthā* (verse):

"One person takes *amṛita,* harms life, and dies young,
and another takes *amṛita* and gains eternal life.
One person takes poison and lives,
and another takes poison and dies.
The boundless wisdom, which is *amṛita,*
is none other than the *Mahāyāna sūtras.*
And such *Mahāyāna sūtras* are what also contain poison.

"It is like butter, *sarpirmaṇḍa* or rock candy,
which, when taken and digested, act as medicine,
but, if not digested, are nothing but poison.
It is the same with the *vaipulya sūtras.*
The wise make of them *amṛita,* and the ignorant, not knowing
the value of the *buddha*-nature, make of them poison."

Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra 12, T12 374:409a19–b4; cf. MMSY p.104

In the same *sūtra,* a great assembly of beings rejoice at the words of the Buddha and make offerings to him, thanking him for showering on them the *amṛita* that will purify them and cause them to attain *nirvāṇa.* They say: "If this *amṛita* is partaken of, one will never again repeat birth, aging, illness, and death."[6]

The notion of *nirvāṇa* (Pa. *nibbāna*) as a deathless or immortal *(amata)* state is present in the earliest Buddhist texts – the Pali *suttas.* According to the *Sutta Nipāta, nibbāna* is a state of immortality:

A *bhikkhu* (monk) who has turned away from desire and attachment,
and understands this world for what it is,
has arrived at the deathless *(amata),* peaceful,
state *(pada)* of *nibbāna* – of one who has overcome death.

Sutta Nipāta 1:11, Vijaya Sutta, PTSN p.35

All that is required is devoted application to the task at hand:

Those who apply themselves devotedly and steadfastly,
to the teachings of Gotama,
have attained the highest goal,
merging into the deathless *(amata),*
freely enjoying the happiness *(nibbuti)* they have attained.

Sutta Nipāta 2:1, Ratana Sutta, PTSN p.40; cf. KNTB, SNVF p.38

According to the *Dhammapada,* the path is characterized by vigilance or heedfulness:

Heedfulness *(appamāda)* is the way to immortality *(amata).*
Heedlessness *(pamāda)* is the way to death.
Those who are heedful *(appamattā)* do not die.
The heedless *(pamattā)* are as if already dead *(mata).*

Dhammapada 2:1

One may live a hundred years
without realizing the deathless state *(amata pāda).*

> Yet better, indeed, is the life of a single day
> of one who realizes the deathless state *(amata pāda).*
>
> *Dhammapada 8:15; cf. DPN*

In the *Amata Sutta* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya,* the Buddha exhorts his disciples to practise meditation on the four foundations of mindfulness *(satipaṭṭhāna).* "Don't let the deathless *(amata)* be lost to you," he counsels them. The four *satipaṭṭhānas* comprise mindfulness of all aspects of the mind-body complex.[7] Realizing through meditation that everything within the sphere of the mind-body complex is impermanent, a source of suffering and lacking in any permanent or real self, a meditator

> turns his mind away from those states and directs it towards the deathless element *(amata dhātu)* thus: "This is the peaceful, this is the sublime, that is, the stilling of all fabrications (of the mind), the relinquishing of all attachments, the destruction of craving, dispassion – cessation *(nirodha), nibbāna.*"
>
> *Majjhima Nikāya 64, Mahāmālunkya Sutta, PTSM1 pp.435–36; cf. MDBB p.540*

In the *Ariyapariyesanā Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya,* the Buddha relates something of his early days as a seeker of the spiritual reality:

> *Bhikkhus,* before my enlightenment, while I was still only an unenlightened *bodhisatta,* I too, being myself subject to birth, sought what was also subject to birth; being myself subject to aging, sickness, death, sorrow and defilement, I sought what was also subject to aging, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement. Then I considered thus: why, being myself subject to birth, do I seek what is also subject to birth? Why, being myself subject to aging *etc.,* do I seek what is also subject to aging *etc.?* Suppose that, being myself subject to birth, having understood the danger in what is subject to birth, I seek the unborn *(ajāta),* supreme security from bondage – *nibbāna.* Suppose that, being myself subject to aging *etc.,* having understood the danger in what is subject to aging *etc.,* I seek the unaging, unailing, deathless *(amata),* sorrowless, and undefiled supreme security from bondage, *nibbāna.*
>
> *Majjhima Nikāya 26, Ariyapariyesanā Sutta, PTSM1 p.163, MDBB p.256*

At the end of this *sutta,* having described how he attained enlightenment, he relates how he set out for Vārāṇasī in order to set in motion the wheel of *Dhamma (dhammacakka)* – to begin his teaching. On the way, he relates how a met a certain Ājīvika Upaka who asks him where he is going, to which he replies:

I go now to the city of Kāshī (Vārāṇasī)
to set in motion the wheel of *Dhamma.*
In a world that has become blind,
I go to beat the drum of the deathless *(amata-dundubhin).*
Majjhima Nikāya 26, Ariyapariyesanā Sutta, PTSM1 p.171, MDBB p.263

See also: **Amṛita** (3.1), **haṭha yoga** (8.5).

1. *Kaula-jñāna-nirṇaya* 5:16.
2. *Shiva Saṃhitā* 2:6–12.
3. *Yogashikhā Upanishad* 5:33.
4. *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā* 3:42, 50, 78, *HYP.*
5. See "candra," *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Yoga, EDYF.*
6. *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* 18, *MMSY* p.155.
7. *Saṃyutta Nikāya* 47:41, *PTSS5* p.184, *SNTB.*

àn, **ànzhōng**, **hēiàn** (C) *Lit.* dull, hazy, unclear, muddled *(àn);* hidden, secret, dark *(àn);* in the midst *(zhōng)* of darkness *(àn);* black *(hēi)* darkness *(àn);* darkness; metaphorically, either inner darkness (*i.e.* spiritual ignorance) or the darkness of the outer world as perceived by one who is spiritually illumined.

The eleventh of the 'twenty-four secrets of alchemy' taught by the Daoist master Liú Yīmíng (1734–1821) says that the elixir or medicine of eternal life – spiritual light or awareness of one's original spiritual nature – is concealed by the darkness of spiritual ignorance. This light can be revealed and refined through spiritual practice:

The light *(míng)* concealed in the darkness *(àn)*
is the medicine of eternal life.
Refine it until it is crystal clear and pure,
radiating light, permeating heaven and earth.
Liú Yīmíng, Dānfǎ èrshísì jué 11, in Jīndān sìbǎi zì jiě, ZW266, DS12

In another text, Liú Yīmíng explains that "light" is truth, consciousness and detachment, while "darkness *(hēiàn)*" is falsehood, unconsciousness, and attachment. When the true spirit or consciousness is awakened, inner light appears where previously there was darkness:

A drop of *yáng* (positive, spiritual) light, also known as true consciousness *(zhēnlíng),* shines forth within the darkness *(hēiàn).* Once this true spirit is revealed, right and wrong, true and false, all become unmistakably clear. You are no longer attached to things and desires,

> nor bound by worldly attachments *(yuán,* causes, *karma).* Then self-refinement *(liànjǐ)* becomes quite easy.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Xiàngyán pòyí, ZW247, DS14*

Those who nurture spiritual light within become detached from the "dark *(àn)*" external world of things and events. To "reverse the light" means to reverse the flow of attention from outward to inward, to go against the downward current of the creation:

> Anyone who can give up the false *(jiǎ)* and return to the True *(zhēn),* relinquish cleverness and reject craftiness, take (their original) nature and life as the single most important matter, reverse the light *(huíguāng)* and turn within *(fǎnzhào),* refine the self and control the mind, contemplate all things with detachment, be empty of all things and unmoved by external things, be unaffected by worldly contamination – they are bright *(míng)* inside and dark *(àn)* outside, and potentially worthy to be called saints, immortals, or *buddhas.*
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùdào lù, ZW268, DS18*

Using the symbolism of the trigrams in the *Yìjīng* for water, which has two outer *yīn* lines and an inner *yáng* line (☵), and fire, which has two outer *yáng* lines and an inner *yīn* line (☲), Liú Yīmíng says that, just as alchemists use the *yáng* (positive) aspect of water to temper the *yīn* (negative) aspect of fire, the 'water' of true knowledge (the mind of *Dào*) can control the 'fire' of reflected knowledge *(língzhī)* in the wayward human mind. True mystical or spiritual knowledge *(zhēnzhī)* illumines its possessor from within – it cannot be observed by others; thus, while he is "dark *(àn, yīn)* outside", he is "bright *(míng, yáng)* inside", just as water is *yīn* (yielding) on the surface and *yáng* (powerful) in its depths. For example, a child's finger can penetrate the surface of a lake; yet a lake can support a mighty ship. Reflected knowledge, on the other hand, is the reverse – apparent and brilliant to others but false; it is like fire, whose flickering external radiance *(yáng)* envelops its dark centre *(yīn),* a phenomenon observable in a candle flame. The flame is powerful enough to burn down a house, but yielding enough to be extinguished by a breath.

Speaking metaphorically, Liú Yīmíng says that when reflected spiritual knowledge submits to real or true knowledge, the alchemical "elixir" of spiritual enlightenment is generated, like fire and water merging harmoniously:

> True knowledge *(zhēnzhī)* within us is dark *(àn)* outside and bright *(míng)* within, like water that is *yīn* outside and *yáng* within. Reflected knowledge *(língzhī)* is bright *(míng)* outside and dark *(àn)* within, like fire that is *yáng* outside and *yīn* within.

> Let true knowledge control reflected knowledge, and let reflected knowledge yield to true knowledge. Then true knowledge and reflected knowledge will merge, and the elixir will be generated. It is like the inversion of water and fire so that they support each other.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Xiàngyán pòyí, ZW247, DS14*

See also: **zhuó**.

anā al-Ḥaqq (A/P) *Lit.* I am the Truth; I am God; the experience of the soul on realization of its identity with God; a saying commonly associated with the Sufi, Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj, who – on a charge of heresy – was tortured and crucified in Baghdad (922 CE) for uttering these words.

Though seemingly heretical from an orthodox Islamic viewpoint, this controversial *shaṭḥīyah* (ecstatic exclamation) has been the subject of considerable discussion among Sufis and others. Everything depends on the true inner condition of the one who uttered it. Rūmī observes:

> "I am God *(anā al-Ḥaqq)*" on the lips of Manṣūr
> was the light (of Truth).
> "I am *Allāh*" on the lips of Pharaoh was a lie.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī II:305, MJR2 p.237*

> A Pharaoh said, "I am God *(anā al-Ḥaqq)*" – and was laid low;
> A Manṣūr said, "I am God *(anā al-Ḥaqq)*" – and was saved.
> The former 'I' is followed by God's curse,
> and the latter 'I' by God's mercy, O loving man.
> For the former was a black stone, the latter a cornelian.
> The former was an enemy to the Light,
> the latter passionately enamoured of it.
> This 'I', O presumptuous meddler,
> was 'He' (God) in the inmost consciousness,
> through oneness with the Light,
> not through (a belief in) the doctrine of incarnation.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī V:2035–38; cf. MJR6 p.122*

Manṣūr was speaking from his inner identification with the Divine, while Pharaoh's claim to divinity was the result of self-assertion and arrogance. Manṣūr explains:

> When a fly is plunged in honey, all the members of its body are reduced to the same condition, and it does not move. Similarly, the

term *istighrāq* (absorption in God) is applied to one who has no conscious existence or initiative or movement. Any action that proceeds from him is not his own. If he is still struggling in the water, or if he cries out, "Oh! I am drowning," he is not said to be in the state of absorption.

This is what is signified by the words, "*Anā al-Ḥaqq* (I am God)." People imagine it to be a presumptuous claim, whereas it is really a presumptuous claim to say, "*Anā al-ʿabd* (I am the servant of God)." *Anā al-Ḥaqq* is an expression of great humility.

The man who says, "*Anā al-ʿabd* (I am the servant of God)" affirms two existences, his own and God's. But he that says, *"Anā al-Ḥaqq"* has made himself nonexistent, and has given himself up and says, "I am God," *i.e.* "I am naught, He is all: there is no being but God's. I am utter, pure nonexistence; I am nothing." This is the extreme of humility and self-abasement. There is more humility in this than any claim to greatness, but people do not comprehend.

When a man acknowledges his servitude to God, he is aware of his act of being a servant. It may be for God, but he still sees himself and his own act along with seeing God. He is not 'drowned'; drowned is he in whom there is no motion or action, but whose movement is the movement of the water.

Rūmī, Fīhi mā Fīhi 11, KFF pp.43–44; cf. in MJR7 p.248, SOU pp.45–46

Jāmī concurs, saying that with perseverance on the mystic path of annihilation *(fanā')*, "*Anā al-Ḥaqq* (I am the Truth, I am God)!" will be realized as no different from "*Huwa al-Ḥaqq* (He is the Truth)!":

> And in this course you must persevere until He mingles Himself with your soul, and your own individual existence passes from your sight. Then, if you regard yourself, it is He whom you are regarding; if you speak of yourself, it is He of whom you are speaking. The relative has become the Absolute, and "*Anā al-Ḥaqq* (I am the Truth)!" is equivalent to "*Huwa al-Ḥaqq* (He is the Truth)!".
>
> *Jāmī, Lavā'iḥ 6, LTSP p.12; cf. LTS p.8*

See also: **ahaṃ Brahmāsmi** (5.1), **hamah man am**, **hamah ūst**, **subḥānī**, **Tat tvam asi** (5.1).

ānand(a) (S/H/Pu), **anand** (Pu) *Lit.* bliss, joy, ecstasy, happiness, beatitude, felicity; particularly spiritual bliss or ecstasy; internal bliss; the bliss of divine love; absolute joy, which is not evoked by the enjoyment of sensory objects, but is a state of consciousness, free from fear, anxiety, care and suffering,

beyond all duality *(dvaita)* and the pairs of opposites *(dvandva);* one of the three attributes *(sach-chid-ānanda* or *sat-chit-ānanda)* traditionally ascribed to *Brahman,* the supreme Reality of the *Upanishads. Sat* means truth, existence, or pure being; *chit* is consciousness; and *ānanda* is bliss.

Mystics say that the nature of God is love, that He is an ocean of love. The experience of this love is deeply blissful and entrancing, and once a soul gets a taste of it, all other pleasures pale by comparison. This automatically detaches the mind from the world and from the creation. Love and bliss are primary attributes of the soul, as well as of God, and the closer a soul becomes to Him, the more is divine bliss experienced. ʿInāyat Khān comments:

> Happiness is the very being of man. Vedantists have called the human soul *ānanda,* happiness, because the soul itself is happiness; that is why it seeks happiness.
>
> *ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK6 pp.28–29*

Pleasure lies in concentration of the mind; anything that leads to concentration of mind will give some pleasure. If the mind is not focused, nothing can give it pleasure, not even the most fascinating of things. But focusing the mind on external things can only provide a happiness that passes, since nothing external lasts forever. Moreover, the mind itself soon tires of particular pleasures and seeks other enjoyments.

Real happiness, therefore, is not to be found in the transient world. It comes from that which is lasting, from the supreme, eternal, and unchanging Consciousness or Being that lies within. Contact with that leads to eternal and unchanging bliss. The greater the contact, the greater the bliss.

Some such experiences may be spontaneous, but as life-changing as they can be, often they do not endure for more than a few moments. Lasting bliss only comes as a result of determined effort. Swami Nikhilananda writes:

> *Ānanda,* or bliss, is the nature of *Brahman.* The pleasure enjoyed by a man when his senses come in contact with a desired object is a reflection or particle of this bliss. Sense pleasure is momentary. As the mind becomes purer through the pursuit of knowledge and the practice of austerities, self-control and chastity, it experiences more and more of the unalloyed bliss of *Brahman.*
>
> *Swami Nikhilananda, on Taittirīya Upanishad 2:5.2, U4 p.50*

Although this bliss is not experienced in finite things, everything is supported by the bliss of the Infinite:

> On a particle of this bliss *(ānanda)* other creatures live.
>
> *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad 4:3.32, U3 p.282*

And:

> From bliss *(ānanda),* verily, are these beings born; by bliss *(ānanda),* when born, do they live; into bliss *(ānanda)* do they enter upon dissolution, do they merge. This is the wisdom taught by Varuṇa and learnt by Bhṛigu.… He who knows this is established in the bliss *(ānanda)* of *Brahman.*
>
> *Taittirīya Upanishad 3:6.1, U4 p.73*

Both the *Upanishads* and the later mystical traditions of India constantly stress the importance of a *guru* for the attainment of mystic bliss and wisdom. Often, a state of constant bliss is the gift of a *guru* to a disciple, and its highest intensity is attained by contact with the Word of God. Hence, many descriptions of bliss in mystic literature relate *ānand* to the Word or divine Music, as well as to the master who has conferred the gift:

> The blissful Music *(anand Dhun)* of the Unstruck *(Anāhad)* …
> vibrates and resounds;
> Through the Word *(Sabad)* of the *guru,* …
> the immaculate Lord is obtained.
>
> *Guru Nānak, Ādi Granth 1042, AGK*

> Bliss *(ānand),* bliss *(ānand)* – everyone talks of bliss *(ānand):*
> bliss *(ānand)* is known only through the *guru.*
> Eternal bliss *(ānand)* is known only through the *guru,*
> when the beloved Lord grants His grace.
>
> *Guru Amardās, Ādi Granth 917, AGK*

> Meeting with my immaculate, sovereign Lord,
> I am in ecstasy *(anad).*
>
> *Guru Arjun, Ādi Granth 927, AGK*

And:

> When I reached the *satguru*'s dwelling and saw him,
> I was filled with bliss *(ānand).*
> Now I am saved from the miseries
> of the ocean of existence.
>
> *Sahajobāī, Bānī, Guru mahimā 73, SBB p.11*

anaññātañ-ñassāmī-t-indriya (Pa), **anājñātam-ājñāsyāmindriya** (S) *Lit.* faculty *(indriya)* of 'I shall know *(ñassāmi)* the as-yet unknown *(anaññātañ)*' or 'I will come to know the as-yet unknown'; the faculty of resolving to know

what is yet to be known; the first of the three supramundane *indriyas* that represent the highest of the twenty-two physical, emotional, mental and spiritual *indriyas* enumerated in the Pali Buddhist *suttas,*[1] and described in greater detail in the *Abhidhamma* (scholastic analysis of the *suttas*).

The *anaññātañ-ñassāmī-t-indriya* indicates an inner confidence and assurance that the unknown will in time be consciously known – through inner realization. Having achieved a high degree of meditative concentration and entered the first *jhāna* (stage of meditative absorption), the aspirant (known as a stream-enterer) embarks on the supramundane *(lokuttara)* or transcendental path leading to *nibbāna.* At this stage, says the *Vibhanga,* he declares, "I will know the *Dhamma* I have not known before in beginningless *saṃsāra* (transmigration)."[2]

See also: **añña**.

1. *E.g. Saṃyutta Nikāya* 48, *Indriya Saṃyutta, PTSS5* pp.193–243.
2. *Sāratthapakāsinī Saṃyutta Nikāya Aṭṭhakathā,* on *Saṃyutta Nikāya* 48, *Indriya Saṃyutta, PTSS5* p.203; see also *Vibhanga, VCRD* p.124; both mentioned in *CDBB* pp.1932–33 (n.206).

ananta-chatushṭaya (S) *Lit.* fourfold *(chatushṭaya)* infinities *(ananta);* the fourfold attributes of one who has attained *kevala-jñāna* (omniscience), *nirvāṇa,* or *moksha* (liberation); a term mostly used in Jainism. The four attributes are:

1. *Ananta-darshana.* Infinite perception.
2. *Ananta-jñāna.* Infinite knowledge.
3. *Ananta-vīrya.* Infinite power.
4. *Ananta-sukha.* Infinite bliss.

andīshah (P) *Lit.* thought, consideration, reflection, meditation; mystically, spiritual meditation. *Andīshah* can refer to rational thinking at the human level, or to thought as it exists in the higher realms, and which provides the subtle patterns that give existence to and are reflected in the realms below. *Andīshah* can also be used for subtle mental force as opposed to the material body, for reality or meaning *(maʿná)* as opposed to form, or for substance as opposed to shadow. It can also refer to the 'Thought' of God, the divine intelligence and intention within all things. It thus has as wide a spread of meaning as *fikr* and *khayāl,* with which it is used more or less synonymously.

Rūmī points out that it is by the power of thought *(andīshah),* whether human or divine, that all things happen. A king or *sulṭān* of ancient times had only one body, yet he commanded armies because of the hidden qualities of his mind. A single driving thought or desire led conquerors such as Alexander

across the face of the globe. Likewise, the intelligence and consciousness of the eternal King is manifested throughout creation by a single divine Thought – His divine creative power. Everything outward arises from a more inward source:

Know that the outward form passes away,
but the world of Reality *(Maʿnī)* remains forever.
How long will you make love with the shape of the jug?
Leave aside the jug's shape: Go, seek water!
Having seen the form,
you are unaware of the Reality *(Maʿnī).*
If you are wise, pick out the pearl from the shell. . . .

By one thought *(andīshah)* that comes into the mind
a hundred worlds are overturned in a single moment.
Though the body of the *sulṭān* is only one in form,
yet hundreds of thousands of soldiers run behind him.
Again, the figure and form of the excellent King
are ruled by one invisible thought *(andīshah).*
Behold people without end who,
moved by one thought *(andīshah),*
have gone over the earth like a flood.
Small is that thought *(andīshah)* in people's eyes,
but like a flood it swallowed and swept away the world.

So, when you see that from thought *(andīshah)*
every craft in the world arises and subsists –
That houses and palaces and cities,
mountains and plains and rivers,
earth and ocean as well as sun and sky,
derive their existence from it as fishes from the sea –
Then why in your foolishness, O blind one,
does the body seem to you as a Solomon,
and thought *(andīshah)* as an ant?

To your eye the mountain appears great:
to you, thought *(andīshah)* is like a mouse,
and the mountain like a wolf.
The material world in your eyes is awesome and sublime:
You tremble and are frightened
at the clouds and the thunder and the sky;
But in regard to the world of thought *(andīshah),* O less than an ass,
you are as complacent and indifferent as a witless stone,
because you are mere form and have no portion of intelligence;

Truly, you are not of human nature, you are the offspring of an ass.
Through ignorance, you deem the shadow to be the substance:
Hence to you, the Substance has become a plaything
and of slight account.

Wait till the day when that thought *(fikr)* and fantasy *(khayāl)*
unfolds its wings and pinions without veil.
Then you will see that the mountains are like soft wool,
and that this earth of hot and cold is nothing;
You will see neither the sky, nor the stars,
nor any existence *(wujūd)* but God,
the One, the Living, the Loving.

Rūmī, Maśnavī II:1020–45; cf. MJR2 pp.274–75

When, through spiritual practice, the mind and spirit spread their wings and break free from the world of bodies and forms, then they will see that nothing in this world has any reality. It is all an insubstantial dance, permeated through and through by the one divine and loving Being.

Sarmad, thinking in terms of his own personal spiritual practice, hints of this experience when he writes that even though he is immersed in divine grace (the "morning breeze") and longs to see the spiritual form of his master ("your beautiful face"), yet it is *andīshah,* his concentrated thought or meditation that leads him to the vision of the beloved:

In the morning breeze *(bād-i ṣabā),*
my heart sought your fragrance;
In the garden, my eye looked for your beautiful face *(rū).*
Yet I could find you neither in this nor in that:
only my meditation *(andīshah)* led me to your abode.

Sarmad, Rubāʿīyāt-i Sarmad 8; cf. RIS p.2

See also: **fikr**, **murāqabah** (8.5).

anekāntavāda (S) *Lit.* doctrine *(vāda)* of non-exclusivity *(an-ekānta);* doctrine of manifoldness, many-sidedness, or uncertainty; non-absolutism; a multifaceted or pluralistic perspective on reality; a fundamental Jain doctrine that embraces the notion that there are multiple viewpoints concerning everything, including absolute Truth or Reality.

In Jainism, according to the teachings attributed to the twenty-four *Tīrthankaras* (teachers), it is understood that the finite human mind, together with the limitations of language, cannot grasp the infinite number of characteristics that things possess. Moreover, the mind, as an instrument of the

soul, cannot attain the same level of spiritual consciousness as the soul itself. Only the naturally omniscient and liberated soul of a *kevalin* (omniscient one) knows and understands everything. At the human level, there are therefore a multitude of perspectives, depending upon the individual, the time, the place, and the circumstances. *Anekāntavāda* is often exemplified by the story of the ten blind men who each describe their encounter with an elephant. Each one, grasping a different part of the beast (tusks, tail, ear, *etc.*), describes it differently. Each perspective is true, but limited.

When applied to religion and the search for spiritual Truth, *anekāntavāda* teaches that all religious doctrines and dogmas, even Jainism, are limited perspectives concerning the nature of Reality and the means to enlightenment. *Anekāntavāda* is understood as integral to the practice of *ahiṃsā* (non-harming, non-violence), especially in human affairs, where most conflicts, great and small, arise from a disagreement over perspectives. *Ahiṃsā,* a fundamental Jain doctrine which presumes that every living creature has a right to live and to be in its own way, can be regarded as the physical expression of *anekāntavāda,* as the thought process that gives rise to the external practice. In recent times, *Anekāntavāda* has thus been interpreted as a basis for religious tolerance. More widely, it is the basis of the idealized democratic, co-operative and truly civilized society, which – because of human nature – can never truly exist. Earlier Jain philosophers, on the other hand, such as Haribhadra (*c.*C7th CE) in his *Anekāntajayapatākā,* maintained that dogmatic or one-sided *(ekānta)* doctrines are imperfect because they fail to recognize the many-sided *(anekānta)* nature of things. When dogmatically asserted, even *anekāntavāda* becomes *ekāntavāda.*

When interpreted in the light of everyday human experience, *anekāntavāda* is a cosmopolitan and open-minded way of thinking, seeking valid meaning among a diversity of opinions. *Anekānta* is essentially an attitude of mind. It implies that one does not insist on the correctness of one's own viewpoint; that one accepts whatever is true, even when expressed by opponents or enemies; that one views other opinions and belief systems with sympathy, respect, and genuine understanding; that the truth of something may contain paradoxes and a number of seemingly opposing points of view; that what appears true from one perspective, may be untrue from another; that one is tolerant of all people and their perspectives; that no view based upon the perspective of just one group of people can contain the entire truth of something; that the anthropocentric view of the world and reality is inherently limited; and that one develops an increasing desire to seek the indescribable and inexpressible spiritual Truth underlying all human perspectives.

Therefore, as Hemachandra (C12th CE) observes, it makes no difference by what names one calls one's God or gods. What is significant is a person's human qualities:

> Let me always salute him who is free from the blemishes of anger, hatred, *etc.,* which haunt the mind like poison, who is full of compassion and who has perfected himself by all virtues, whether he is called by the name of *Vishṇu, Shiva, Brahmā, Jina,* Sun, Moon, *Bhagavān,* or Buddha.
>
> *Hemachandra; cf. in CJTT pp.72–73*

Anekāntavāda is the basis of the Jain doctrines of *nayavāda* (the doctrine of partial perspectives) and *syāvāda* (the doctrine of 'maybe', of qualified assertion). *Nayavāda* is a logical presentation of the view that there are manifold perspectives concerning everything. *Syāvāda* is a way of verbalizing the principle of *anekāntavāda* in which nothing is dogmatically asserted as the truth. Its system of logic is epitomized by the word 'maybe' and is encapsulated in expressions such as "in some ways it is so; in some ways it is not so." In fact, seven such statements form the basis of *syāvāda:* there are seven ways of saying "maybe".

There is evidence of a debate based upon this sort of premise in early Buddhism. In the Pali texts, for instance, the Buddha is reported as saying, "I have taught and declared some teachings to be certain, and others to be uncertain."[1] As a proponent of the Middle Way, the Buddha also says that he is not an *ekaṃsavādin* (S. *ekāntavādin*) – one who holds to a one-sided, dogmatic or extreme view of things – but a *vibhajjavādin* (Pa).[2] *Vibhajjavāda* (S. *vibhajyavāda*) is a non-dogmatic, analytical approach to the exploration of philosophical and metaphysical topics. In the context in which the Buddha is using the term, it means that because he is able to see the various sides of different doctrines, he avoids becoming dogmatic or one-sided.

See also: **nayavāda**.

1. *Dīgha Nikāya* 9, *Poṭṭhapāda Sutta, PTSD1* p.191.
2. *Majjhima Nikāya* 99, *Subha Sutta, PTSM2* p.197.

āneñja (Pa), **āniñjya** (S) *Lit.* static, imperturbable, immovable, unshakable, unwavering, constant, neutral; in Buddhism, the state of beings who dwell in *arūpaloka* (formless or immaterial realm), which is also called *arūpāvacara* (realm of the formless); hence such expressions as *āneñja-jhāna* (imperturbable meditative absorption) and *āneñja samādhi* (imperturbable meditative concentration); also used in the context of neutral kammic (or karmic) formations *(sankhāras).*

The Pali *suttas* and the *Abhidhamma* (scholastic analysis of the *suttas*) speak of volitional or wilful formations *(cetanā-sankhāra)* of *kamma* (S. *karma*),

either wholesome *(kusala)* or unwholesome *(akusala),* that constitute the second link *(nidāna)* in the chain of dependent origination, and which give rise to rebirth. Such kammic *sankhāras* may be of either body *(kāya),* speech *(vāca)* or mind *(citta),* and are said to be of three types: good, bad, or neutral. Technically, they are known as: meritorious *kamma* formations *(puññābhi-sankhāra),* demeritorious formations *(apuññābhi-sankhāra),* and neutral formations *(āneñjābhi-sankhāra* or *āneñja-sankhāra).*[1]

Demeritorious formations (bad *kammas*) pertain only to existence in *kāmaloka* (realm of sensual desire); meritorious formations (good *kammas*) pertain to existence in both *kāmaloka* and *rūpaloka* (realm of subtle forms, patterns, or archetypes); and neutral formations pertain to the four immaterial realms of *arūpaloka.* Essentially, the categories are an analysis of the three kinds of *kamma* (S. *karma*), and how they lead to rebirth. The *Abhidhamma* identifies a further thirteen *cetanās* (volitions, mental processes that move the mind in a particular direction) that pertain to *puññābhi-sankhāra;* twelve that pertain to *apuññābhi-sankhāra;* and four that pertain to *āneñjābhi-sankhāra.*

According to the *Āneñjasappāya Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya,* the Buddha points the way to transcendence of the world and the attainment of imperturbability *(āneñja)* in higher meditative states. In this *sutta, āneñja* is used in regard to attainment of the fourth *jhāna* (state of meditative absorption), which is the highest level in *rūpaloka,* and to the first two of the immaterial states in *arūpaloka.* Elsewhere, however, all four of the immaterial states are described as "imperturbable *(āneñja)*":

> *Bhikkhus,* sensual pleasures are impermanent, hollow, false, deceptive; they are illusory, the prattle of fools. Sensual pleasures here and now and sensual pleasures in lives to come, sensual perceptions here and now and sensual perceptions in lives to come – both alike are *Māra'*s realm, *Māra'*s domain, *Māra'*s bait, *Māra'*s hunting ground. On account of them, these evil unwholesome *(akusala)* mental states such as covetousness *(abhijjhā),* ill will *(byāpāda)* and haughtiness *(sārambha)* arise, and they constitute an obstruction to a noble disciple in training here. . . .
>
> In this respect, *bhikkhus,* a noble disciple thinks like this: "Sensual pleasures here and now and sensual pleasures in lives to come . . . constitute an obstruction to a noble disciple in training here. Suppose I were to abide with a mind abundant and exalted, having transcended the world and made a firm determination in my mind. When I do so, there will be no more evil unwholesome mental states such as covetousness, ill will and haughtiness in me, and with the abandoning of them my mind will be unlimited, immeasurable, and well developed." When he practises in this way and frequently abides thus, his mind acquires confidence in this realm *(āyatana).* Once there is full

> confidence, he either attains the imperturbable *(āneñja)* now or else is committed to (the future attainment of) wisdom. On the dissolution of the body, after death, it is possible that the evolving consciousness may pass on (to birth) in the imperturbable *(āneñja).* This, *bhikkhus,* is declared to be the first way directed to the imperturbable *(āneñja).*
>
> *Majjhima Nikāya 106, Āneñjasappāya Sutta, PTSM2 p.262; cf. MDBB pp.869–70*

The text then repeats the same formula with regard to attainment of the other three *jhānas.*

According to the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya,* the Buddha also says that this degree of imperturbability is attained by mental purity and concentration, and leads to the acquisition of various forms of supernormal or miraculous power *(iddhi):*

> When his concentrated mind is thus purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement and has become malleable, directable, steady and has attained imperturbability *(āneñja),* he directs and applies his mind to the various supernormal powers *(iddhi-vidha).* He then enjoys the different kinds of supernormal power.
>
> *Dīgha Nikāya 2, Sāmaññaphala Sutta, PTSD1 pp.77–78; cf. in PPVM p.369*

In his *Visuddhimagga,* Buddhaghosa emphasizes the fact that imperturbability is attained when consciousness is reinforced by various good qualities that ward off the intrusion of their negative counterparts:

> For consciousness *(citta)* reinforced by faith *(saddhā)* is not perturbed by faithlessness; when reinforced by vigour *(viriya),* it is not perturbed by idleness; when reinforced by mindfulness *(sati),* it is not perturbed by negligence; when reinforced by concentration *(samādhi),* it is not perturbed by agitation; when reinforced by understanding *(paññā),* it is not perturbed by ignorance *(avijjā);* and when illuminated *(obhāsagata),* it is not perturbed by the darkness of defilement *(kilesa).* So when it is reinforced by these six states, it has attained imperturbability *(āneñjappatta).*
>
> *Buddhaghosa, Visuddhimagga 12:17, PTSV p.377, PPVM pp.372–73*

1. *E.g. Dīgha Nikāya* 33, *Sangīti Sutta, PTSD3* p.217; *Vibhanga, VCRD* p.135.

angakoq enlightenment (Inuit, Yupik) *Lit.* the enlightenment of a shaman *(angakoq);* the light of the soul or spirit, experienced within by an aspiring native Inuit or Yupik shaman. The present-day author Joan Price describes the experience:

> The *angakoq* enlightenment consists of a mysterious light which the shaman suddenly feels in his body, inside his head, within the brain, an inexplicable searchlight, a luminous fire, both literally and metaphorically speaking; for he can now, even with closed eyes, see through darkness and perceive things and coming events which are hidden from others: thus they look into the future and into the secrets of others.
>
> The candidate obtains this mystical light after long hours of waiting, sitting on a bench in his hut and invoking the spirits. When he experiences it for the first time, it is as if the house in which he is suddenly rises; he sees far ahead of him, through mountains, exactly as if the earth were one great plain, and his eyes could reach to the end of the earth. Nothing is hidden from him any longer; not only can he see things far, far away, but he can also discover souls, stolen souls, which are either kept concealed in far, strange lands or have been taken up or down to the land of the dead.
>
> *Joan Price, Sacred Scriptures of the World Religions, SSRP p.19*

See also: **chante ista** (8.2).

animitta (Pa), **ānimitta** (S), **mtshan ma med pa** (T), **wúxiāng** (C), **musō** (J) *Lit.* absence *(a, med pa, wú, mu)* of signs *(nimitta, mtshan ma, xiāng, sō);* signless, formless, without characteristics; unconditioned, conditionless; beyond distinctions, beyond the external appearance of things, transcending perceptible forms; the 'characteristic' of absolute Reality; a general term in the Pali Buddhist texts that is applied to a range of states that are understood in one way or another to be beyond the realm of forms, signs or differentiation, the highest of all such states being *nibbāna;* also one of the eighteen *anupassanās* (contemplations, reflections) or *vipassanās* (insights), and one of the three gateways to liberation *(vimokkha-mukha).*

Nimitta (sign, appearance) refers to the overall appearance of something as opposed to its detailed characteristics. When the attention is turned towards the appearance of things, the result is perception *(saññā)* and recognition, which can lead to attachment and clinging. Since everything is in a state of permanent flux, this inevitably results in suffering of one form or another when the object is taken away or the attention tires of the attachment and seeks to replace it. In Buddhist understanding, in order to detach the attention from the outward appearance of things, one must focus on their underlying unconditioned or signless reality. *Animitta* points to this essential reality, and by preventing the attention from going beyond the point of recognition – blocking it before it reaches a stage of attachment and clinging, attraction or aversion – the mind gains a degree of liberation or freedom *(vimokkha, vimutti).* This is known as

animitta-vimokkha (signless liberation) and *animitta ceto-vimutti* (signless liberation of mind).

Buddhaghosa therefore lists *animitta* as one of the "eighteen principal insights *(mahāvipassanā)*".[1] Also known as the eighteen *anupassanās* (contemplations, reflections), these begin with contemplation or reflection on the three characteristics of phenomena (impermanence, suffering, and not-self), and continue through contemplation on various aspects of and attitudes towards the changing nature of phenomena. "One who cultivates *animittānupassanā* (contemplation of the signless)," he says, "relinquishes the sign (*nimitta,* the outer appearance)." This state is attained by contemplation of the impermanent:

> Whosoever, being filled with determination, understands all things to be impermanent *(anicca),* such a person attains signless liberation *(animitta-vimokkha).*
>
> *Buddhaghosa, Visuddhimagga 21:70, PTSV p.658; cf. in BAUS*

Animitta-vimokkha is one of the three gateways to liberation *(vimokkha-mukha),* which, when taken as the focus of meditation *(anupassanā),* lead to *nibbāna.* The others are *appaṇihita-vimokkha* (desireless liberation) and *suññatā-vimokkha* (emptiness liberation). The same liberations and several others are considered at length in the *Mahāvedalla Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya,* where they are called *ceto-vimuttis* (liberations of mind), among which is *animitta ceto-vimutti.*[2] They also appear in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* ('Path of Analytic Knowledge') of the *Khuddaka Nikāya* and in Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga* ('Path of Purification') as the three doors or triple gateway *(vimokkha-mukha* or *vimokkha-dvāra)* to liberation. These three *vimokkhas* identify the transcendent nature of *nibbāna,* while their opposites characterize *saṃsāra* (the worlds of transmigration). According to a summary in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga:*

> Three gateways to liberation *(vimokkha-mukha)* lead to escape from the world, namely: that the mind *(citta)* meditates on all conditioned things *(sankhāras)* as limited, and hastens onwards (in consciousness) to that which is unconditioned *(animitta-dhātu);* that the mind is disturbed by all the conditioned things of existence, and hastens onwards (in consciousness) to that which is desireless *(appaṇihita-dhātu);* that the mind sees all conditioned things as something alien, and hastens onwards (in consciousness) to that which is void *(suññatā-dhātu).*
>
> *Paṭisambhidāmagga 5:54, PTSP2 p.48*

While a number of *suttas* speak of the "signless liberation of mind *(animitta ceto-vimutti)*",[3] others talk of the signless concentration of mind *(animitta*

ceto-samādhi). In general, they are referring to the mind's transcendence of the mundane world of 'signs' and form, with little indication of a specific meaning regarding a particular stage of spiritual advancement. The *Animitta Sutta* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya,* however, uses *animitta ceto-samādhi* for a practice that leads Venerable Moggallāna to the stage beyond the highest of the four higher *jhānas* (the realm of neither-knowing-nor-not-knowing), which implies *nibbāna* itself. In a description of his spiritual ascent, Venerable Moggallāna describes how, having attained the realm of neither-knowing-nor-not-knowing, he is led by concentration on the signless *(animitta samādhi),* assisted by the Buddha's spiritual power, to the experience of supreme gnosis:

> Then, friends, I thought: "They talk of the signless concentration of mind *(animitta ceto-samādhi),* the signless concentration of mind – now what is that signless concentration of mind?"
>
> Then I thought: "In this, a monk, by paying no attention to signs *(nimitta),* enters and dwells in the signless concentration of mind *(animitta ceto-samādhi).* This is called the signless concentration of mind *(animitta ceto-samādhi).*"
>
> Then, friends, paying no attention to signs, I entered and dwelt in the signless concentration of mind *(animitta ceto-samādhi).* But as I dwelt thus, consciousness of signs arose within me.
>
> And then, friends, the Blessed One came to me by means of spiritual power and said: "Moggallāna, Moggallāna, do not be negligent in the signless concentration *(animitta samādhi).* Make your mind steady, make the mind one-pointed, concentrate your mind in signless concentration *(animitta samādhi)!*" And after that, friends, paying no attention to signs, I entered and dwelt in signless concentration of mind *(animitta samādhi).*
>
> Now, friends, if anyone could rightly say of another: "He is a disciple who through the teacher's assistance has attained the supreme gnosis *(mahābhiñña),*" he could rightly say that of me.
>
> *Saṃyutta Nikāya 40:9, Animitta Sutta, PTSS4 pp.268–69; cf. CDBB p.1308, SNMW*

Attempting to clarify the issue, the analytical commentary on the *Mahāvedalla Sutta* identifies thirteen states and stages as *animitta ceto-vimuttis* (signless liberations of mind). These comprise: *vipassanā* (insight), the four lower *jhānas* (states of meditative absorption), and the four paths and four fruitions associated with the supramundane *(lokuttara)* or transcendental path. Beyond these is *nibbāna,* which is pure unconditioned 'signlessness':

> Thirteen *dhammas* (aspects of existence) are named *animitta ceto-vimutti: vipassanā,* the four formless states, the four paths and the four fruitions. In this connection, *vipassanā* removes the sign of

> permanence *(nicca nimitta),* the sign of happiness *(sukha)* the sign of self *(atta),* so it is known as *animitta.* The four formless states are known as *animitta* due to the nonexistence of the sign of form *(rūpa)* in them. The paths and fruitions are *animitta* due to the nonexistence of defilements that make signs *(nimitta-kārākanam)* in them. *Nibbāna* is just *animitta.* But that is not a *ceto-vimutti,* so it is not listed (here as a fourteenth).
>
> *Majjhima Nikāya Aṭṭhakathā (Papañcasūdanī), PTSMA2 p.355, on Majjhima Nikāya 43, Mahāvedalla Sutta, PTSM1 pp.296–97; cf. in SMPB p.25*

See also: **vimokkha-dvāra** (8.5), **vimoksha**, **vimutti**.

1. Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 20:90, *PTSV* pp.629–30.
2. *Majjhima Nikāya* 43, *Mahāvedalla Sutta, PTSM1* pp.296–98.
3. *E.g. Dīgha Nikāya* 33, *Sangīti Sutta, PTSD3* p.248.

aññā (Pa) *Lit.* highest knowledge; derived from *a* (highest) + *ñā* (to know); in Buddhism, transcendental knowledge, mystical awareness, gnosis.

Aññā appears frequently in the Pali *suttas* in the disciple's standard declaration of having reached enlightenment:

> There is a method of exposition by means of which a *bhikkhu* … can declare final knowledge *(aññaṃ vyākaroti)* thus: "Rebirth has ended; the holy life has been lived; what had to be done has been done; and there is no more coming into any state of being."
>
> *Saṃyutta Nikāya 35:158, PTSS4 p.139; cf. CDBB p.1215, in PBD p.39*

Aññā is the mystical awareness or gnosis that accompanies true transcendence of this world. It is present in all but the initial part of the first stage of spiritual advancement according to the fourfold gradation of the supramundane *(lokuttara)* or transcendental path: stream-enterer *(sotāpanna),* once-returner *(sakadāgāmī),* non-returner *(anāgāmī),* and noble or enlightened one *(arahanta).* Each of these four gradations is divided into two – the path and its fruition. So there is the path of stream-entry and the fruit of stream-entry, and likewise for the other four, making eight stages in all. A stream-enterer *(sotāpanna)* is so-called because he has irreversibly entered the 'stream' that leads to *nibbāna;* the names of the other stages indicate the likelihood of return to this world. The four stages of the supramundane path represent increasing freedom from all the fetters *(saṃyojanas),* defilements *(āsavas)* and impurities *(kilesas)* that bind living beings to the cycle of birth and death.

According to the *suttas,* and explained more fully in the scholastic and analytical *Abhidhamma,*[1] three supramundane or transcendental faculties

(indriya) are active during progress through these eight stages. *Aññā,* as gnosis, is an essential aspect of the last two of these three faculties. The three supramundane faculties are: *anaññātañ-ñassāmī-t-indriya* (faculty of 'I shall come to know the as-yet unknown'), which characterizes the path of the stream-enterer; *aññindriya* (faculty of gnosis), which pertains to the next six stages, from the fruit of stream entry to the path of the *arahanta;* and *aññātāvindriya* (faculty of one who possesses gnosis), which is the status of the *arahanta,* one who has attained the fruit of arahantship. The first is the confidence that the highest gnosis will eventually be attained; the second and third represent its gradual realization. Gnosis *(aññā)* is therefore present from the fruit of stream-entry up to attainment of the fruit of arahantship inclusively.

As with many Buddhist terms, the translation of *indriya* as 'faculty' is far from ideal, but there is no single English word that suffices. The *indriyas* are understood as aspects, factors, powers, attributes, qualities and faculties – physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual – that exist within a human being. Twenty-two such *indriyas* are listed and described in the *suttas* and *Abhidhamma.* They comprise: the six faculties of the subtle aspects of the five senses along with that part of the mind *(manas)* that cognizes sensory input; three sexual faculties (virility, femininity, and vitality); five feeling faculties (pleasure, pain, gladness, sadness, and equanimity); five spiritual faculties (faith, effort, mindfulness, meditative concentration, and wisdom); and the three supramundane faculties, of which the last two represent degrees of gnosis. The highest human faculties are therefore understood to be those of gnosis *(aññā).*

See also: **indriya** (▸1).

1. *Itivuttaka* 3:13, *PTSI* p.53; *Saṃyutta Nikāya* 48:23, *Aññindriya Sutta, PTSS5* p.204; *Vibhanga, VCRD* p.124; see Bhikkhu Bodhi, *Connected Discourses of the Buddha, CDBB* pp.1932–33 (n.206).

aññātāvindriya (Pa), **ājñātāvindriya** (S) *Lit.* faculty *(indriya)* of one who knows *(aññātāvī);* the faculty of one endowed with the highest gnosis; ultimate gnosis; the gnosis of an *arahanta* (noble one, enlightened one); the last of the three supramundane *indriyas* that represent the highest of the twenty-two physical, emotional, mental and spiritual *indriyas* enumerated in the Pali Buddhist *suttas*[1] and described in greater detail in the *Abhidhamma* (scholastic analysis of the *suttas*).

See also: **aññā**.

1. *E.g. Saṃyutta Nikāya* 48, *Indriya Saṃyutta, PTSS5* pp.193–243.

annihilation of self Elimination of the egoistic self through union with the Divine. Annihilation is also a term used of human passions, of the scattered thoughts of the mind, of impressions that come through the senses, and so on. The annihilation of these is brought about through progressive annihilation or setting aside of the self. The less self or ego there is in a person, the quieter the mind, and less it is disturbed by the senses. Ultimately, the egoistic self is entirely eliminated when the soul attains union with God, discovering paradoxically that its true self or nature is divine.

The Flemish mystic Jan van Ruysbroek (*c.*1290–1381) describes seven steps leading to "annihilation in God's essence":

> Here follows the seventh and last step, the most excellent and highest, which can be realized either in time or in eternity. It comes about when, above all conception and knowledge, we find in ourselves a certain infinite or abyssal unknowing; when, transcending every name that has been given to God or to any created thing, we expire into the eternal namelessness, wherein we are lost; when, beyond all practice of virtue, we contemplate and find within ourselves an eternal repose, . . . a blessedness without measure, in which we are all one.
>
> *Jan van Ruysbroek, Seven Steps 7; cf. SSL p.57*

The thirteenth-century Syrian Christian, Bar Hebraeus, writing of the desert fathers such as Evagrios Pontikos as advanced souls and "initiated ones", uses the analogy of the soul as a light that is annihilated in the light of God:

> Blessed and worthy of all blessedness is he who has found an initiated one, the rays of whose sun rise over the flame of his lamp and whose light has been annihilated by the light of his Lord, who is dead to the world and living in his God.
>
> *Bar Hebraeus, Book of the Dove 4:63; cf. BDH p.72*

The seventeenth-century Angelus Silesius, son of a Polish nobleman, speaks of the soul's return to God, only to realize that it has always been there:

> In God annihilated, I shall arrive again,
> where from eternity I have forever been.
> *Angelus Silesius, Cherubinic Wanderer 5:332, CW p.124*

Scholars and theologians have debated the nature of this annihilation, trying intellectually to comprehend the difference, if any, between union and annihilating absorption. Mystics of all traditions, on the other hand, have consistently observed that only he who has had the experience can understand. The matter is simply not amenable to conceptual understanding. The

question only exists in the intellectual mind. The soul who has attained union with God, knows by experience. As the author of the *Cloud of Unknowing* writes:

> Therefore, I urge you: seek experience rather than knowledge. Through pride, knowledge can often lead you astray, whereas humble, loving experience does not lie. "Knowledge breeds conceit, but love edifies."[1] Knowledge requires effort; experience brings rest.
>
> *Book of Privy Counselling 12; cf. CU (23) p.176, CUCW pp.198–99, LPD (13) p.73*

Ultimately, whatever one's culture or tradition, there can be only one experience of the Divine; an experience that is, by its very nature, inexpressible. Only one who has had the experience can truly know the relationship between the soul and God.

See also: **abandonment of self**.

1. *1 Corinthians* 8:1.

aññindriya (Pa), **ājñātendriya** (S) *Lit.* faculty *(indriya)* of higher knowledge *(aññā);* faculty of gnosis; the second of the three supramundane *indriyas* that represent the highest of the twenty-two physical, emotional, mental and spiritual *indriyas* enumerated in the Pali Buddhist *suttas*[1] and described in greater detail in the *Abhidhamma* (scholastic analysis of the *suttas*). *Aññindriya* is the gnosis attained prior to the ultimate gnosis of the *arahanta* (noble one, enlightened one).

See also: **aññā**.

1. *E.g. Saṃyutta Nikāya* 48, *Indriya Saṃyutta, PTSS5* pp.193–243.

anubhav(a) (S/H/Pu) *Lit.* experience, intuition, direct perception or cognition, realization, certainty; knowledge derived from personal experience or observation; intense, personal experience; hence, spiritual, mystic, or inner experience; direct personal experience of spiritual truth.

Anubhava appears in compound terms used especially in Jain philosophy. These include *ātmānubhava* (experience of the soul, self-realization), *brahmānubhava* (experience of *Brahman,* realization of *Brahman*), *karma-phalānubhava* (experience of the fruits of past actions), and *anubhava-bandha* (intensity of the bondage due to *karmas,* one of the four types of karmic bondage in Jainism).

Direct, personal, mystic experience during meditation confirms the indirect or conceptual knowledge gained by a study of sacred books and mystical writings. The ninth-century philosopher-mystic Shankara, speaking of *Brahman* as the ultimate Reality, comments on the essential nature of personal experience:

> A disease does not go away simply by uttering the name of the medicine without taking it; in the same way, one cannot be liberated by merely uttering the word *Brahman* without direct experience *(anubhava).*
>
> *Shankara, Vivekachūḍāmaṇi 62; cf. VCSM p.22*

> The knowledge produced by the experience *(anubhava)* of one's own true nature instantly destroys the ignorance arising from the sense of 'I' and 'mine', like sunrise dispels wrong notions of where one is.
>
> *Shankara, Ātmabodha 46; cf. ABSC pp.85–86*

> The realization of *Brahman* is man's highest goal.
> The knowledge of *Brahman*
> finds its culmination in experience *(anubhava).*
>
> *Shankara, on Brahma Sūtra 1:1.1–2; cf. BSBS pp.11, 16*

The true *brāhmaṇ,* says the *Vajrasūchikā Upanishad,* directly perceives the "Self *(Ātman)* without a second, as clearly as an *āmalaka* fruit in the palm of one's hand". It goes on to depict this supreme Self as

> having the form of truth, wisdom, bliss and eternity, which is, by Itself, devoid of distinctions, and is yet the source of endless distinctions; which functions as the indwelling Spirit in all beings; which, like *ākāsha* (space), pervades the interior and the exterior of everything, which has the nature of bliss, indivisible, immeasurable, realizable only through personal experience *(anubhava).*
>
> *Vajrasūchikā Upanishad 9; cf. PU p.937*

And the same *Upanishad* concludes with the means of attaining this experience: "Meditate on that *Brahman,* the Self *(Ātman)* who is being, consciousness and bliss, without a second."[1]

The twentieth-century scientist and mystic Sardar Bahadur Jagat Singh similarly explains that only by *anubhav* – by direct personal experience – can the way in which the creation is manifested be truly understood:

> One may doubt how Sound can create and maintain the universe. This is not the subject of intellect or reasoning. Reasoning takes us only to a certain point. Beyond that we have to take the help of *anubhav*

> (experience), and until we have developed the inner eye and obtained the power of spiritual knowledge, we have to depend upon the *anubhav* and inner experience of those who have gone within, and have seen with their own eyes. In the meantime, faith must replace reason.
>
> *Sardar Bahadur Jagat Singh, Science of the Soul, Discourses 4; cf. SOSJ p.45*

Personal experience is the essence of mysticism. Speaking of the experience of meeting God, Guru Ravidās writes:

> This experience *(anubhav)* is such that it cannot be expressed.
> Who will leave God, once he has found Him?
> God *(Hari)* is in all, and all is in God;
> He who has recognized the Lord as his own
> is himself his own witness, and needs no other.
> He who knows this is wise.
>
> *Ravidās, Vāṇī 11, SGRV pp.72–73*

1. *Vajrasūchikā Upanishad* 9; *cf. PU* p.938.

anumān(a) (S/H/Pu) *Lit.* inference, induction, deduction, supposition, hypothesis, conjecture, speculation, rough estimate. *Anumāna,* in the sense of an inference, is a process of passing from something known to something unknown, as one infers the existence of fire from the sight of smoke.

Anumāna is one of the six categories of evidence or valid knowledge *(pramāṇa)* according to Indian philosophy, the others being *pratyaksha* (direct perception); *upamāna* (analogy); *shabda* (scriptural authority) or *āptavākya* (verbal testimony, especially of a yogi, mystic, or genuine holy man), which is also called *āgama; arthāpatti* (presumption, inference from circumstances); and *anupalabdhi* (non-perception) or *abhāva pratyaksha* (absence of perception). Two categories of *anumāna* are generally identified: internal and personal inference, which is undertaken for one's own self *(svārtha)* based on reasoning processes; and inference undertaken for the benefit of others *(parārtha), i.e.* the process of public proof, employing the procedures of standard logic.

However, there are differences of opinion between the various schools regarding which may be truly regarded as valid means of acquiring knowledge. *Nyāya* excludes the last two, while *Sāṃkhya* accepts only *pratyaksha, anumāna,* and *shabda.*

Not all schools of Indian philosophy adhere to the six-part categorizations of forms of knowledge. Some list nine by including *sambhava* (equivalence), *aitihya* (tradition, fallible testimony), and *cheshṭā* (gesture). In the *Yoga Sūtras,* Patañjali enumerates *anumāna* as one of three sources of valid

knowledge *(pramāṇa),*[1] the other two being *pratyaksha* (direct evidence) and *āgama* (verbal testimony from a trustworthy source). In the Buddhist theory of knowledge, only *pratyaksha* and *anumāna* are regarded as valid means of acquiring knowledge.

Jain philosophy, which is founded upon the writings of accredited Jain teachers of the past,[2] subdivides and elaborates the several modes of knowledge *(jñāna),* valid knowledge *(pramāṇa),* self-evident knowledge *(pratyaksha)* and non-self-evident or indirect knowledge *(paroksha)* into an extensive and detailed system, concerning which there are various schools of thought. In Indian philosophy, Jainism and Buddhism are regarded as unorthodox because they do not accept the authority of the *Vedas.*

Anumāna is generally regarded as one of the categories of non-self-evident knowledge *(paroksha).* Since it is based on an intellectual process, it is essentially different from mystic knowledge or gnosis. The pure soul is characterized by consciousness; it cannot be perceived by any of the senses, nor can it be known by inference or by any rational process. The higher consciousness of the soul is its own touchstone of validity, but this awareness has to be developed, not by reason, but by spiritual practice. Speaking of those who rely only on conjecture or speculation *(anumān)* to guide them in the search for the highest Reality, Swami Shiv Dayal Singh writes:

> Many a *shāstra* did they create:
> all were consumed by religious deeds and ceremonies.
> In all their seeking, none could find the immaculate Lord.
> "Not this, not this *(neti neti),*" the *Vedas* sing,
> but the vision of God, they could not have.
> Upon speculation *(anumān)* is their knowledge based:
> How could they describe the testimony
> of the true Being who dwells beyond?
> *Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 38:12.52–54; cf. SBP p.353*

See also: **paroksha**, **pramāṇa**, **pratyaksha**.

1. Patañjali, *Yoga Sūtras* 1:7.
2. *E.g.* Āchārya Samantabhadra, *Āpta-mīmāṃsā* 76–79; Kundakunda, *Samaya-sāra* 49; Āchārya Vidyānanda, *Parīkshāmukham* 1:1–3, 3:1*ff.,* 6:2*ff.*

anupadhishesha nirvāṇa (S), **anupādisesa nibbāna** (Pa), **phung po lhag ma med par mya ngan las 'das pa** (T), **wúyú nièpán** (C), **muyo nehan** (J) *Lit. nirvāṇa (mya ngan las 'das, nièpán)* without *(an, med, wú)* limiting *(upādhi)* remainder *(shesha, lhag ma, yú); nirvāṇa* without residue; the final *nirvāṇa* that takes place at death, marking the end of the cycle of rebirth, *saṃsāra,*

karma, and individual existence; final liberation from further activity or rebirth in this world; *nirvāṇa* with no fuel (Pa. *upādi*) remaining, an allusion to the loss of the mental and bodily aggregates *(skandhas, phung po)* at death, so that nothing is left to kindle desire or craving; used synonymously with *parinirvāṇa* (final *nirvāṇa*), *nirupadhishesha nirvāṇa* (*nirvāṇa* without limiting remainder), and *pratishṭhita nirvāṇa* (abiding *nirvāṇa*), in which the liberated being remains sufficient unto 'himself', having nothing further to do with the realms of *saṃsāra.* With the attainment of *anupadhishesha nirvāṇa* or *parinirvāṇa,* the *arhat* is no longer a witness to suffering and is beyond feelings of pain and pleasure.

Anupadhishesha nirvāṇa is contrasted with *sopadhishesha nirvāṇa* (*nirvāṇa* with remainder), which is attainment of *nirvāṇa* while still living in the body, so that there is still fuel for the fire of *karma,* although the *arhat* is no longer influenced by it. Although this is a spiritually evolved state, the *arhat* must still witness suffering and go through his own *karma,* with the attendant sensations of pleasure and pain, until the attainment of *anupadhishesha nirvāṇa* or *parinirvāṇa* at his passing. These two states correspond to the Hindu *jīvanmukti* (liberation while living) and *videhamukti* (liberation after leaving the body). According to the *Itivuttaka,* the Buddha describes these two states to his monks:

> *Bhikkhus,* there are these two kinds of *nibbāna (nibbāna-dhātu).* What are the two? The kind of *nibbāna* with remainder *(saupādisesa)* and the kind of *nibbāna* without remainder *(anupādisesa).*
>
> What, *bhikkhus,* is the kind of *nibbāna* with remainder *(saupādisesa)?* Here a *bhikkhu* is an *arahanta,* one whose impurities are destroyed *(khīṇāsava),* the holy life fulfilled, who has done what had to be done, laid down the burden, attained the goal, destroyed the fetters of being, completely released through final gnosis. However, his five sense faculties remain unimpaired, by which he still experiences what is agreeable and disagreeable and feels pleasure *(sukha)* and pain *(dukkha).* It is the extinction of attachment or lust *(rāga),* hatred *(dosa)* and delusion *(moha)* in him that is called the kind of *nibbāna* with remainder *(saupādisesa).*
>
> Now what, *bhikkhus,* is the kind of *nibbāna* without remainder *(anupādisesa)?* Here a *bhikkhu* is an *arahanta,* … completely released through final gnosis. For him, here in this very life, all that is experienced, not being delighted in, will be extinguished. That, *bhikkhus,* is called the kind of *nibbāna* without remainder *(anupādisesa).*
>
> *Itivuttaka 2:17, PTSI p.38; cf. KNJI*

See also: **sopadhishesha nirvāṇa**.

anupubba-nirodha (Pa), **anupūrva-nirodha** (S) *Lit.* successive *(anupubba)* cessation *(nirodha);* gradual extinction; nine successive extinctions; a gradual cessation of various aspects of materio-mental existence, attained during penetration into the eight *jhānas* (states or stages of meditative absorption), which lead to *nirodha-samāpatti* (attainment of cessation) when the *jhānas* have been transcended. This spiritual ascent is also referred to as *anupubba-vihāra-samāpatti* (attainment of the successive abodes) or *anupubba-samāpatti.* See **nirodha**.

anutpāda-jñāna (S), **mi skye ba shes pa** (T), **wúshēng zhì** (C), **mushō chi** (J) *Lit.* knowledge *(jñāna, shes, zhì, chi)* of non-arising *(anutpāda, mi skye ba, wúshēng, mushō);* awareness of not coming into existence; certainty that the ten fetters *(saṃyojana),* the afflictions *(kleshas)* and the impurities *(āsravas)* will not arise again; one of the two kinds of *jñāna* that accompany liberation from birth and death, the other being *kshaya-jñāna* (knowledge that the *kleshas* have been eliminated), which precedes *anutpāda-jñāna;* listed among the ten *jñānas* according to the *Abhidharma* (analytical) texts of the *Sarvāstivāda* school of early Buddhism.

Kshaya-jñāna and sometimes *anutpāda-jñāna* are also aspects of the culminating stage of the five-stage path *(pañcha-mārga)* to enlightenment described by the many early forms of pre-*Mahāyāna* Indian Buddhism, and also carried forward into the later *Yogāchāra* school. At this final stage, enlightenment is attained and the practitioner is said to have become an *ashaiksha* (not a learner, not a disciple).

See also: **jñāna**, **kshaya-jñāna**, **pañcha-mārga** (▸4).

anutpattika-dharma-kshānti, **anutpāda-dharma-kshānti** (S/Pa), **mi skye ba'i chos la bzod pa** (T), **wúshēng fǎrěn** (C), **mushō bōnin** (J) *Lit.* patient acceptance *(kshānti, bzod pa, fǎrěn, bōnin)* of the non-arising *(anutpattika, anutpāda, mi skye ba, wúshēng, mushō)* of phenomena *(dharma, chos);* a *Mahāyāna* Buddhist expression for the realization or recognition that all phenomena are empty *(shūnyatā)* of any separate existence or self and that, in reality, nothing comes into existence and nothing passes away; the state of *nirvāṇa,* in which things neither come into being nor cease from being; the state of seeing things as they really are; contrasted with an intellectual appreciation or understanding of Reality, which in itself provides no inner peace or contentment, and does not truly apprehend Reality.

Anutpattika-dharma-kshānti is said to be attained by a *bodhisattva* upon reaching the eighth stage *(bhūmi)* of purification on the *bodhisattva* path. This acquiescence and conviction concerning the emptiness of all phenomena

helps him on his long and difficult path of helping others to liberation and *nirvāṇa.* He realizes that, in reality, nobody is saving others and no one is being saved. The attainment of this stage is sometimes said to be associated with the first or other stages of the *bodhisattva* path. The intellectual realization of *shūnyatā* takes place at an early stage, but understanding grows, and only reaches fulfilment with the attainment of full perfection and enlightenment.

anuttara-samyak-sambodhi (S), **anuttara-sammā-sambodhi** (Pa), **bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub** (T), **wúshàng zhèngděng jué** (C), **mujōshōtōgaku** (J) *Lit.* incomparable *(anuttara, bla na med pa, mujō),* full *(samyañc, yang dag par),* complete *(sam, rdzogs pa)* enlightenment *(bodhi, byang chub, gaku);* incomparable, unsurpassed, best *(anuttara)* + full, true, right *(samyañc)* + complete *(sam, rdzogs pa)* enlightenment; supreme *(wúshàng)* highest *(zhèngděng)* enlightenment *(jué);* the enlightenment of an unsurpassed, fully and completely awakened *buddha.* See **sambodhi**.

ānxīn (C) (J. *anjin*) *Lit.* to quieten *(ān)* the mind *(xīn);* to calm the mind; peace of mind. In Daoism, a prerequisite for an adept's spiritual practice is an empty and tranquil mind.

In the *Book of Master Heavenly Seclusion,* a manual on inner contemplation *(guān)* and attainment of the *Dào (dédào)* attributed to master Sīmă Chéngzhēn (C8th), the master advises practitioners to maintain calm both within and without by guarding the mind *(xīn)* against the invasion of thoughts and the eyes against the intrusion of excitement:

> Inside, I calm my mind *(ānxīn);*
> outside, I calm *(ān)* my eyes.
> Mind and eyes –
> both must be calmed *(ān).*
> *Sīmă Chéngzhēn, Tiānyǐnzǐ 5, DZ1026 1:39b, JY158*

Master Zhāng Sānfēng (C14th), discoursing on the teachings of master Wáng Zhé (C12th), advises that it is good practice to keep the mind calm throughout the day. In this way, it becomes easier to calm the mind during meditation, allowing the *Dào* to take up residence:

> Whenever the attention goes to disturbing, wayward or aimless thoughts, you must stop them immediately. Whenever you hear of good

> or bad things concerning honour or dishonour, you must dismiss them all to prevent the mind from taking them in. When the mind takes them in, it becomes full. When the mind is full, there is no room for the *Dào.*
>
> Everything you see or hear – regard them as if you had neither seen nor heard them. This prevents all the myriad things *(wànwù)* from entering the mind. Not taking external things into the mind is emptying the mind *(xūxīn).* A mind that does not go after anything external is called a peaceful mind *(ānxīn).* When the mind is calm and empty, *Dào* automatically takes up its abode there.
>
> When becoming irritated about things begins to disturb the mind *(xīn),* how can there be peace of mind *(ānxīn)?*
>
> *Zhāng Sānfēng Tàijí liàndān mìjué, JH19*

See also: **xūxīn** (8.5), **zhìxīn** (8.5).

aparāvidyā (S/H) *Lit.* lesser *(aparā)* knowledge *(vidyā);* inferior or lower knowledge; relative or indirect knowledge, such as that acquired through the senses and the intellect; knowledge that can be written or spoken; contrasted with *parāvidyā* – true knowledge or gnosis gained by inner, mystic experience *(anubhava).*

The *Upanishads* speak of two kinds of knowledge *(vidyā):* lower *(aparā)* and *parā* (higher, superior). *Aparāvidyā* is acquired by reading books, through sense perceptions, and by inference. It includes knowledge of the *Vedas* and *Vedāngas. Parāvidyā* is that by which God and His nature can be known. The difference between the two is like the difference between reading a tourist guide and going to a destination and experiencing it for oneself.

In the *Chhāndogya Upanishad,* Nārada approaches Sanatkumāra and confesses:

> Revered Sir, I have studied all the *Vedas,* the epics, the *Purāṇas,* grammar, the rules regarding the worship of ancestors, mathematics, the science *(vidyā)* of portents, the science of treasures, logic, ethics, etymology, phonetics, physical sciences, the science of weapons, astronomy, snake-charming, and fine arts. But whatever I know is only in words; all this knowledge has not helped me to know the Self *(Ātman).* I have heard from spiritual teachers like you that a knower of Self goes beyond suffering. I am lost in suffering. Please teach me how to get rid of suffering and how to go beyond.
>
> *Retold from Chhāndogya Upanishad 7:1.2–3*

Sanatkumāra responds:

> Whatever you know is just words, the names of finite phenomena.... It is the Infinite that is the source of abiding joy because It is not subject to change. Therefore, seek to know the Infinite.
>
> *Retold from Chhāndogya Upanishad 7:1.3, 23.1*

After Nārada has been purified, Sanatkumāra then shows him the "other side of darkness", spiritual liberation, and becomes known as Sanatkumāra Skanda (Sanatkumāra the Wise). The *Muṇḍaka Upanishad* relates a similar story:

> Shaunaka, a great householder approached the sage Angiras in the right manner, and asked: "O adorable sir, what is that by knowing which everything becomes known?"
>
> Angiras replied: "There are two kinds of knowledge *(vidyā)* to be acquired – so say the knowers of *Brahman.* These are the higher *(parā)* and the lower *(aparā).* The lower *(aparā)* is gained from the *Ṛig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sāma Veda, Atharva Veda,* the science of pronunciation, the code of rituals, grammar, etymology, metrics, and astrology. Then there is the higher *(aparā)* by which the imperishable *Brahman* is attained. It is that by which the wise perceive *Brahman* everywhere; which otherwise cannot be perceived or grasped; which is without source, features, eyes, ears, hands, or feet; which is eternal, undecaying, all-pervasive, and extremely subtle; and which dwells in all beings and is the origin of all."
>
> *Muṇḍaka Upanishad 1:1.3–6*

aparihāna (Pa), **aparihāṇa** (S) *Lit.* without *(a)* deprivation *(parihāna);* not subject to loss; incapable of relapse, retrogression, decline, or falling away; in Buddhism, an irreversible state attained through meditative absorption in which an aspirant reaches the stage where retrogression or backsliding into negativity, doubt and impurity is no longer possible. In the *Theravāda* tradition, *aparihāna* is said to apply to an *ariya-puggala* (noble person) who has entered the supramundane path and has attained full mastery of the four lower *jhānas* (states of meditative absorption).[1]

According to *Theravāda,* the spiritual path is divided into the mundane *(lokiya)* or outer stages and the supramundane *(lokuttara),* transcendental, or inner stages. Entry to the *jhānas* is equivalent to entering the supramundane path. The mundane stage of the path begins when the seeker sets out to develop virtue, concentration and wisdom, and culminates when these qualities have been developed to such a degree that he sees the three primary characteristics of mundane existence – impermanence *(anicca),* suffering *(dukkha),* and having no permanent, unchanging self or personal identity *(anattā)* – as they really are. The seeker is now ready to embark upon

the supramundane stage of the journey, with its four stages: stream-enterer *(sotāpanna),* once-returner *(sakadāgāmī),* non-returner *(anāgāmī),* and noble or enlightened one *(arahanta)* who has attained *nibbāna.* A stream-enterer *(sotāpanna)* is so-called because he has entered the 'stream' that leads to *nibbāna;* the names of the other stages indicate the likelihood of return to this world. Each of the four stages of the supramundane path represents the conquest or shedding, to an increasing degree, of all the fetters *(saṃyojanas),* defilements *(āsavas)* and impurities *(kilesas)* that bind living beings to the cycle of birth and death. Not until all hindrances and impurities have been overcome is the possibility of regression fully surmounted.

Since early Buddhist times, the attainment of *aparihāna* (Pa. non-retrogression) – and by inference rising above the possibility of *parihāna* (Pa. retrogression) – has been the subject of debate among the different schools. The point at issue has been the stage at which an *ariya-puggala* can no longer be disturbed by impure thoughts and states of mind and is consequently no longer subject to spiritual retrogression.

Some early Buddhist schools, notably the *Mahāsāṃghika,* downgraded the status of the *arhat* (Pa. *arahanta*), claiming that some *arhats* could be led astray, entertain doubts, and be subject to spiritual ignorance. Evolving out of these early schools, the teachers of the *Mahāyāna* tradition downgraded the spiritual status of both *arhats* and *pratyeka-buddhas* (independent, *i.e.* non-teaching, *buddhas*), classing them as inferior to fully enlightened *buddhas.* More significantly, the *Mahāyāna* tradition introduced the notion of the *bodhisattva* – of one who vows not to enter a *nirvāṇa* from which there is no return, but to remain in the realms of rebirth until all sentient beings have attained enlightenment. Ten stages *(bhūmis)* of spiritual development are described for the *bodhisattva,* but it is only on reaching the eighth stage (*achalā-bhūmi,* immovable stage) that retrogression is no longer deemed possible.[2]

See also: **bhūmi**.

1. See "aparihāna-dhamma," *Pali Buddhist Dictionary, PBD.*
2. See Étienne Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism, HIBL* pp.81, 274–75.

apavarga (S), **apawarg** (H/Pu) *Lit.* from or away *(apa)* + to forsake or turn *(vrj);* turning away from, completion; liberation of the soul from birth and death, the final beatitude; liberation from birth and death, deliverance from pain and suffering; a state of complete release from all bondage to the body and senses; synonymous with *mukti, moksha, kaivalya,* and *nirvāṇa.*

The term is used particularly by the *Nyāya* and *Sāṃkhya* schools of Hindu philosophy. According to *Nyāya,* the earthly life of a human being is full of

pain and suffering, and his ultimate aim is to attain *apavarga. Apavarga* is defined negatively as the cessation of pain and suffering, rather than positively as the enjoyment of pleasure. This is because there can be no pleasure without an admixture of pain and suffering. Ignorance resulting from false identification of the soul with the body, the senses and the mind is regarded as the root cause of all pain, suffering, and rebirth. Only the correct knowledge *(jñāna)* of the true nature of things, *i.e.* the sixteen categories, technically known as *padārthas* and mentioned by the *Nyāya* system, will bring about this liberation. The first nine categories deal with logic, and the last seven have the function of preventing and destroying error.

The *Nyāya* school endeavours to help distinguish true knowledge from false knowledge *(mithyā-jñāna),* and to provide the means of acquiring this knowledge by the correct logical procedure or 'rules' *(nyāya).* It does not recognize the possibility of *jīvanmukti* or liberation while still living in a human body. However, some scholars – basing their thinking on Vātsyāyana's *Nyāya Sūtra Bhāshya*[1] – have pointed out that while *jīvanmukti* is not formally recognized and liberation is believed to come only after death, *Nyāya* does admits a stage corresponding to *jīvanmukti,* in which a person has shed delusion and attained enlightenment, and wherein none of his actions are tainted with selfishness.[2]

The *Maitrī Upanishad* says that the divine Sun is the cause of both pleasure and pain, of heaven, and liberation from it:

> Yonder blessed Sun is the cause of creation *(sarga),* of heaven *(svarga),* and of final emancipation *(apavarga).*
>
> *Maitrī Upanishad 6:30, TPU p.444*

See also: **moksha**, **mukti**, **nirvāṇa**.

1. Vātsyāyana, *Nyāya Sūtra Bhāshya* 4:2.2.
2. M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy, OIP* pp.19, 266; Swami Prabhavananda, *Spiritual Heritage of India, SHI* p.207.

appamaññā (Pa) *Lit.* infinitude, boundlessness; the four immeasurables, infinitudes, illimitables, or boundless states described as a focus for meditation in the Pali Buddhist literature,[1] *viz.* lovingkindness *(mettā),* compassion *(karuṇā),* happiness at the welfare of others *(muditā),* and equanimity *(upekkhā).* A practitioner consciously fills his mind with the thought of these qualities, one at a time, which he then deliberately broadcasts to the entire world, reaching out to all sentient beings – family, local community, country, and far beyond. These qualities are called immeasurables because in their perfection and essential nature they are universal, applicable to the entire universe. One who is imbued with these qualities is universal in outlook,

having no prejudice or preference for any individual or any particular group, class, tribe, race, nation, religion, and so on. The term is used synonymously with *brahmavihāra* (divine dwelling). See **brahmavihāra** (8.5).

1. *E.g. Dīgha Nikāya* 33, *Sangīti Sutta, PTSD3* p.223.

appanā samādhi (Pa) *Lit.* fixed *(appanā)* concentration *(samādhi);* in Buddhism, full concentration, attainment; the final stage of concentration leading to entry into the first of the eight *jhānas* (stages of meditative absorptions).

Appanā samādhi is preceded by two less stable stages. The first is *parikamma samādhi* or *khaṇika samādhi,* which is the initial and undeveloped concentration that practitioners commonly experience when meditation is first attempted. This is followed by threshold, neighbourhood or access concentration *(upacāra samādhi),* which leads on to attainment or fixed concentration *(appanā samādhi),* which is the concentration at the level of entry into the first *jhāna.*

These three *samādhis* belong to *kāmaloka,* the three realms of sensual desire that lie below the *jhānas,* and which comprise the hellish regions, this world, and the lower heavenly regions. Attainment of the first *jhāna* heralds entry into the lower reaches of *rūpaloka* (world of subtle forms, patterns, or archetypes). There are four *jhānas* or degrees of absorption in *rūpaloka,* followed by a further four of an even greater degree of subtlety in *arūpaloka.* In his *Visuddhimagga,* Buddhaghosa (C5th CE) describes at length how *upacāra samādhi, appanā samādhi* and the eight *jhānas* may be attained by means of forty meditation subjects or objects *(kammaṭṭhāna).*[1] *Appanā samādhi,* full and fixed concentration, is characteristic of all the *jhānas,* though an increasing depth and intensity of concentration is developed as the practitioner progresses.

The Thai monk Phra Ajahn Thate Desaransi (1902–1994), a teacher in the *Theravāda* Thai Forest Tradition, describes the intensity of the concentration attained:

> When you're in this state you can't examine anything, because the mind is totally uninvolved with anything at all. Only when the mind comes out of this state and enters threshold concentration *(upacāra samādhi)* can you begin examining things again. You will then see clearly into all the truths that the Buddha said are to be known, and into other matters as well.
>
> *Phra Ajahn Thate Desaransi, Steps Along the Path, SAPT*

Having previously discussed the characteristics and development of *upacāra samādhi,* the Malaysian monk Venerable Sujiva goes on to talk about the next level of attainment – *appanā samādhi* (fixed concentration), also known

as *appanā-vitakka* (fixed thought). The objects of which he speaks are the focuses of meditation *(kammaṭṭhāna)* used in *Theravāda* meditation to develop concentration:

> There will come a point when the concentration developed is deep enough to enter what we call *appanā samādhi,* blissful absorption or fixed concentration. When this happens, the mind switches to a different level, called *rūpāvacara,* the world of subtle form. It is the sphere of the first *jhāna.* This type of mind is totally cut off from what we see, hear, smell, taste, and touch (in this world). In fact, it is also cut off from the normal type of thinking and awareness. It has been described by some people as a kind of deep sleep. But they know very clearly how they sink into the (meditation) object and become completely absorbed in it. Once the mind becomes absorbed in the object, they become completely unconscious. But when they come out, they will know the nature of the state of mind that has just passed and also the object that they were attending to. So even if you enter into the first absorption *(jhāna)* for one second, you will know that for that one second you were completely unconscious. Only when you come out are you aware of the blissful state of *jhāna* during that one second. Even if you go in for half a second, you will know that for half a second you were completely cut off from the whole sensual sphere. Only when you come out from this half a second of concentration will you know what state of mind you were in.
>
> When you go into absorption *(jhāna),* there is a completely different level of consciousness. Therefore if you're meditating, you may forget the form of the body, be without thoughts and with the mind very still and blissful – but that is still not *appanā,* not the first *samatha-jhāna.* But that does not mean it is bad; it is still a good and peaceful state of mind.
>
> It is very clear that in the absorption you are mindful. And sooner or later you may know, after emerging, the nature of the (meditation) object, because going into absorption means that your mind is absorbed in the object. When the mind is completely absorbed in the object, then you know what the object is! Of course, there are certain types of *samatha* meditation where the objects are very abstract. And when you first enter into *jhāna,* they may not be very clear, because they are very abstract objects that last for only a very short time. But when you go in constantly, and you go up to the third and fourth *jhānas,* the objects should be clear as well.
>
> In certain forms of meditation, such as meditation on *kasiṇas* (physical meditation objects) and also the breathing meditation, *ānāpāna,* where the object before absorption is very clear and bright, (the image

> of) the object in which you become absorbed is also very clear. As in the example of the water *kasiṇa* and the access concentration of the water *kasiṇa* before the first absorption – it may be a completely clear pool of water that is very still. When you are entering into the absorption, it is like sinking into the water as if you are diving in and becoming completely immersed in the water. When in the water, you do not know anything. But once out of the water, you know in what state of mind you were – how you were while under water, so to speak. This is a very clear and blissful experience; but you only realize how clear and blissful it was when you come out of it.
>
> *Venerable Sujiva, Access and Fixed Concentration; cf. AFCS*

See also: **jhāna** (8.5), **kammaṭṭhāna** (8.5), **kasiṇa** (8.5), **khaṇika samādhi**, **parikamma samādhi**, **upacāra samādhi**.

1. Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 3–11, *PTSV* pp.84–372.

apramād(a) (S/H), **appamāda** (Pa), **bag yod pa** (T), **bùfàngyì** (C), **fuhōitsu** (J) *Lit.* non-carelessness *(a-pramāda);* non-negligence *(bù-fàngyì);* hence, heedfulness, vigilance, watchfulness, mindfulness, diligence; a term used especially in Buddhism for the state of being consciously recollected and concentrated in thought; self-awareness; a state of being mentally present with oneself, watchful against the entry of negative or impure thoughts of any kind; regarded as the foundation of good human behaviour, the source of all virtue, and the basis of spiritual growth; frequently mentioned in the Pali *Theravāda* texts, and one of the many aspects of mental function (S. *chaitta*) according to the *Yogāchāra* and *Sarvāstivāda-Vaibhāshika* schools of *Abhidharma;* the converse of *pramāda* (heedlessness, mindlessness, thoughtlessness, carelessness, negligence), in which the mind is distracted by sensory input and by thoughts and feelings of many kinds.

The term appears throughout Buddhist literature. In the *Dhammapada,* in a section of sayings on *appamāda* and *pamāda,* the Buddha says:

> Heedfulness *(appamāda)* is the way to immortality *(amata).*
> Heedlessness *(pamāda)* is the way to death.
> Those who are heedful *(appamattā)* do not die.
> The heedless *(pamattā)* are as if already dead *(mata).*
>
> Fully understanding this,
> the wise, intent on heedfulness *(appamāda),*
> delight in heedfulness *(appamāda),*
> rejoicing in the realm of the noble ones *(ariyas).*...

By constant application, heedfulness *(appamāda),*
discipline and self-control,
a wise man should make an island for himself
that no flood can overwhelm.

Ignorant, foolish people fall into heedlessness *(pamāda);*
A wise man guards heedfulness *(appamāda)*
as his greatest treasure.

Give not yourself to heedlessness *(pamāda),*
have no intimacy with lust and sensuality;
The heedful *(appamattā),* meditative person
obtains abundant bliss.

When a wise man drives off
heedlessness *(pamāda)* by heedfulness *(appamāda),*
he climbs a high tower of wisdom.
Free from suffering,
he gazes on the suffering crowd below,
as a mountaineer gazes upon the dwellers of the plain.

Heedful *(appamattā)* among the heedless *(pamattā),*
wide awake among those who slumber,
the wise man progresses
as a fine racehorse leaves behind an old nag. . . .

A *bhikkhu* (monk) who delights in heedfulness *(appamāda),*
seeing danger in heedlessness *(pamāda),*
progresses like a fire,
burning all bonds, great or small.

A *bhikkhu* who delights in heedfulness *(appamāda),*
seeing danger in heedlessness *(pamāda),*
is not liable to fall, but is close to *nibbāna.*

Dhammapada 2:1–2, 5–9, 11–12

The Buddha also says that *Māra,* the lord of death and tempter of humankind, cannot touch a person who is truly mindful:

Māra finds no way
into those who are possessed of virtue,
living in heedfulness *(appamāda),*
and freed by perfect wisdom.

Dhammapada 4:14

Therefore, he concludes:

> Delight in heedfulness *(appamāda),*
> guard your mind with care.
> Extricate your self *(atta)* from the path of evil,
> as does an elephant sunk in mud.
>
> *Dhammapada 23:8*

Using a number of similes, the *Appamāda Sutta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya* praises heedfulness as an all-encompassing quality, each example ending with the same formulaic conclusion. According to one of these:

> Just as the footprints of all animals that roam on land fit into the footprint of the elephant, and the elephant's footprint is declared foremost among them, that is, with respect to size, so too, all wholesome qualities are rooted in heedfulness *(appamāda)* and converge upon heedfulness *(appamāda),* and heedfulness *(appamāda)* is declared foremost among them.
>
> *Anguttara Nikāya 10:15, Appamāda Sutta, PTSA5 p.21, NDBB p.1354*

The *Appamāda Sutta* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* uses the same simile, the conclusion here being that "heedfulness *(appamāda)* is the one thing that secures both kinds of good – the good pertaining to the present life and the good pertaining to the future life."[1] According to the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya,* the Buddha's last exhortation was: "Transient are all generated things! Strive on with diligence *(appamādena sampādetha)!*"[2]

See also: **pramāda**.

1. *Saṃyutta Nikāya* 3:17, *Appamāda Sutta, PTSS1* pp.86–87.
2. *Dīgha Nikāya* 16, *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, PTSD2* pp.120, 156.

apratisaṃkhyā-nirodha (S), **so sor brtags min gyi 'gog pa** (T), **fēizémiè** (C), **hichakumetsu** (J) *Lit.* cessation *(nirodha, 'gog pa, miè, metsu)* without *(a, min gyi, fēi, hi)* analysis *(pratisaṃkhyā, so sor brtags, zé, chaku);* cessation arising without effort and reflection *(pratisaṃkhyā);* elimination or absence of some mental phenomenon *(dharma)* or aspect of mind function or impurity *(klesha)* that is not occasioned by insight, conscious effort and the intention to get rid of it, but which happens unconsciously in the absence of the conditions necessary to encourage it; a Buddhist term, contrasted with *pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha,* which is the elimination of the same by insight and analysis of the *dharma.* While the elimination of impurities by means of *pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha* is regarded as permanent because it is arrived at

consciously, *apratisaṃkhyā-nirodha* is regarded as impermanent due to the lack of conscious intention. Dormant impurities may resurface whenever opportune circumstances present themselves. See **pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha**.

apratishṭhita nirvāṇa (S), **mi gnas pa'i mya ngan las 'das pa** (T), **wúzhù nièpán** (C), **mujū nehan** (J) *Lit.* non-abiding *(apratishṭhita, mi gnas pa, wúzhù) nirvāṇa (mya ngan las 'das pa, nièpán);* the non-permanent *nirvāṇa* of a *buddha* who, out of compassion, remains by choice in the realms of transmigration *(saṃsāra)* in order to help sentient beings attain *nirvāṇa;* contrasted with the permanent or abiding *(pratishṭhita) nirvāṇa* of the *Theravāda arhat* (noble one, enlightened one) entered into at the time of his death and *parinirvāṇa;* a *Mahāyāna* doctrine that deems *apratishṭhita nirvāṇa* superior to the *pratishṭhita nirvāṇa* of the *Theravāda arhat* (noble one, enlightened one).

According to the *Mahāyāna* Buddhist tradition, *pratishṭhita nirvāṇa* is the *parinirvāṇa* of the *Theravāda arhat* or *buddha* who enters *nirvāṇa* after death and dwells there forever, having entirely transcended *saṃsāra.* This is contrasted with the non-abiding *(apratishṭhita) nirvāṇa* of a *buddha* who chooses not to dwell permanently in *nirvāṇa,* so that he may remain free to return to *saṃsāra* and, while remaining unsullied by it, help sentient beings towards enlightenment. This *nirvāṇa* is called *apratishṭhita* because it is not a permanent resting place.

Theravāda defines *nirvāṇa* as the complete liberation of an *arhat* from all suffering, imperfection, and attachment to the world of *saṃsāra.* The *arhat* attains *parinirvāṇa* after death and is never born again. *Mahāyāna* describes the *arhat*'s *nirvāṇa* as *pratishṭhita nirvāṇa* – as abiding, as contrasted with the *apratishṭhita* (non-abiding) *nirvāṇa* of a *buddha* who retains the freedom to be born wherever he chooses in order to help release sentient beings from *saṃsāra.*

A *bodhisattva* who has attained buddhahood through his purification practices, meditation and spiritual accomplishment is able to attain *pratishṭhita nirvāṇa.* Yet because of his great compassion *(mahākaruṇa)* for others, he has taken a vow not to enter a *nirvāṇa* from which there is no return until he has freed others from suffering and the world of *saṃsāra. Mahāyāna* considers its position superior to that of *Theravāda,* which it portrays as lacking in compassion.

The nature of the *nirvāṇa* attained or attainable by a *bodhisattva* evolved along with the development of the *Mahāyāna* tradition, in particular with the introduction of the concept of *apratishṭhita nirvāṇa.* Put simply, a *bodhisattva* vows not to enter *nirvāṇa* while any beings remain in *saṃsāra.* The introduction of the notion of *apratishṭhita nirvāṇa* modified the concept, since (in theoretical terms) it 'permits' a *bodhisattva* to attain full buddhahood and to

'enter' and 'leave' *nirvāṇa* whenever he wants. He can 'come and go' as he pleases. That is to say, he 'postpones' entry into *pratishṭhita nirvāṇa* – abiding *nirvāṇa,* from which there is no return – but enjoys *apratishṭhita nirvāṇa.* Clearly, a *bodhisattva* who has attained buddhahood has become a *buddha,* and there is no difference between them. An advanced *bodhisattva* who passes his time helping other beings but has not yet attained buddhahood or *nirvāṇa* is not a *buddha.*

This kind of discussion presumes that the human intellect is capable of comprehending the nature of *nirvāṇa,* the *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas* who have attained that state, and what it might mean to come and go from the state of *nirvāṇa.* However, many Buddhists and others have pointed out that *nirvāṇa* is beyond human understanding. Moreover, not only is talk of *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas* as individuals at variance with the Buddhist notion of no eternal self, but the attainment of *nirvāṇa* is beyond the reach of time and space. And how, it may be asked, does a *bodhisattva* avoid being drawn into attaining buddhahood when he reaches the threshold of *nirvāṇa?* The East Asian belief that celestial *bodhisattvas* such as Avalokiteshvara have permanently rejected buddhahood so that they can remain in *saṃsāra* for the benefit of others makes little sense in the light of the concept of *apratishṭhita nirvāṇa.* These topics are considered in some *Mahāyāna* texts, but there is never any satisfactory conclusion, for human cogitations on such matters will always remain speculations that bear little relationship to the reality.[1]

Nirvāṇa itself is beyond definition, and scholarly analysis of the state according to doctrinal considerations seems somewhat dubious. When the Buddha himself was asked, "What is *nirvāṇa?*", he replied simply that it is "incomprehensible, indescribable, inconceivable, unutterable".[2] The Buddha's emphasis seems to have been the practical path for the spiritual seeker to follow, rather than descriptions of the indescribable. Likewise, when asked whether a *tathāgata (buddha)* exists after death, or not, or both or neither, the question was declared by the Buddha to be one of the four unanswerable questions, the 'undeclared issues' or 'unexpounded things *(avyākṛita-vastu)*', which he said could never receive satisfactory intellectual answers.[3] These kind of responses from the Buddha are at variance with the scholarly analysis of later interpreters and originators of doctrine.

See also: **nirvāṇa**.

1. For this and further discussion, see Paul Williams, *Mahāyāna Buddhism, MBDF* pp.60–62, 185–86, 288–89 (n.39–41), 291 (n.51).
2. Unsourced, in Huston Smith, *The World's Religions, WRHS* p.113.
3. *E.g. Majjhima Nikāya* 72, *Aggivacchagotta Sutta, PTSM1* pp.485–89; *Anguttara Nikāya* 10:93, *Diṭṭhi Sutta, PTSA5* pp.185–89.

asamprajñāta samādhi (S) *Lit.* without *(asam)* anything known *(prajñāta)* absorption *(samādhi); samādhi* in which the distinction of the knower, the knowing and that which is known has been dissolved in the soul *(ātman)'*s complete union with the supreme *Ātman* (Self) or *Brahman;* the complete loss of any individual sense of self in the bliss and consciousness of *Brahman;* an essentially indescribable state of nonexistence that is at the same time pure Existence or Being; contrasted with *samprajñāta samādhi.*

It is generally said that in *samprajñāta samādhi* an awareness of union with *Brahman* still remains, while in *asamprajñāta samādhi* there is complete identity with *Brahman.* Some commentators have observed, however, that this distinction is too simplistic. The spiritual journey from the human level to that of *Brahman* requires the seeker to pass through many levels, realms, or stages of consciousness. The whole of creation below *Brahman* is said to be the manifestation of primal nature *(prakṛiti),* which is the subtle blueprint of the entire diversity of created forms that have ever existed and will ever exist. All these realms of *prakṛiti* need to be traversed before the *ātman* merges with *Brahman.*

In *samprajñāta samādhi,* the seeker progresses by focusing his consciousness on progressively higher planes within the hierarchy of created nature or *prakṛiti.* This focus of concentration is effectively an object or seed within the consciousness, hence the name *samprajñāta* (something known). As the seeker's concentration deepens, at each successive level, he enters a 'cloud *(megha)*', so to speak, a void *(shūnya)* or sky *(ākāsha),* out of which all lower creation is manifested. At this point, the seeker seems to merge into the void or sky itself. He seems to become the void, which was the highest aspiration of his former concentration. This is an *asamprajñāta samādhi,* for he has now become one with the object of his concentration.

However, there is yet further to go. Emerging from the void, the seeker again focuses concentration upon the next higher level, and this becomes the seed or object of his concentration. This process continues through a series of *samprajñāta* and *asamprajñāta samādhis* until, having transcended all the realms of *prakṛiti,* the seeker finally merges into *Brahman.* This is the highest *asamprajñāta samādhi.* It is equivalent to *nirvikalpa samādhi,* and is also known as *nirbīja* (without seed) *samādhi.* Since It is regarded as the ultimate divine Source, having no higher origin, *Brahman* is Itself described as *nirbīja* (seedless).[1] As the seeker ascends through the various realms of *prakṛiti,* he gains power over the energies of creation and comes to know many things. These include miraculous powers *(siddhis),* accurate clairvoyance, the memory of past lives, understanding the language of other creatures, and a great deal more.

During this ascent, it is possible, if not probable, that a seeker will mistake a lower *asamprajñāta samādhi* for the final goal. This is one of the reasons why it is essential for a seeker to have a *guru* who, through his spiritual power

and vision, can inwardly monitor the progress of his disciple and guide him higher. Naturally, a *guru* can only guide a disciple to the height that he has himself attained. The spontaneous *samādhi* experienced by some individuals, and interpreted by them as union with the Divine, though blissful, full of illumination and gnosis, and way beyond the experience and even the imagination of the vast majority of human beings, may nonetheless be a *samādhi* of a lower degree. Such experiences would normally be the result of spiritual practice in past lives.

Another way of describing the same ascent is to use the analogy of a seed. First, the effect of concentration and meditation arrests or suppresses all mental and physical impressions and imperfections (arising from past *karmas* and *saṃskāras*) into 'seed' form. However, given the right circumstances, these seeds can again sprout and flourish. This is the situation in *samprajñāta samādhi.* Only complete destruction of these seeds leads to *asamprajñāta samādhi.* This is why, until all the seeds of *karma* and past impressions have been destroyed, even an evolved soul can still fall prey to ordinary human temptations. It may only take some external circumstance to awaken a dormant seed, lying suppressed and hidden within the mind, for the individual to be swept away. The Indian *shāstras,* for example, contain many stories of great yogis who, after spending many years in seclusion and attaining great heights, have succumbed at the first sight of a beautiful woman.

In his *Yoga Sūtras,* Patañjali cryptically describes how the process of *dhāraṇā* (concentration) leads to *dhyāna* (contemplation), and thence to *samādhi.*[2] This process is repeated as the soul ascends through the void or sky of each region, until *Brahman* Itself is reached. From the very outset of the journey, throughout the successive practice of *dhāraṇā, dhyāna* and *samādhi,* the seeker remains unconscious of the body, and is focused entirely on the inner worlds of mind and consciousness until the goal is reached.

On the other hand, a seeker may ascend to the astral region (lower mental plane) and return to the physical body with a higher knowledge and understanding, yet may not have experienced true *samādhi. Samādhi* requires concentration, contemplation and absorption in one thing, while a seeker who has ascended to the astral level and has returned with knowledge of future events and so on, will have permitted his mind to move around from one thing to another.[3]

See also: **nirbīja samādhi**, **nirvikalpa samādhi**.

1. *E.g. Subāla Upanishad* 9:1–14.
2. Patañjali, *Yoga Sūtras* 3:1–6.
3. For much of the above, see I.K. Taimni, *Science of Yoga, SYYP* pp.39–41; R.S. Mishra, *Textbook of Yoga Psychology, TYPY* pp.133–37. See also Patañjali, *Yoga Sūtras* 1:17–18.

asaṃskṛita-dharma (S), **asankhata-dhamma** (Pa), **'dus ma byas kyi chos** (T), **wúwéi fǎ** (C), **muihō** (J) *Lit.* an unconditioned *(asaṃskṛita, 'dus ma byas, wúwéi)* something *(dharma, chos, fǎ, hō);* a *dharma* that is without cause *(ahetuka),* condition or dependence, and is beyond time (eternal), transcending all the phenomena of the materio-mental realms. In Japanese Buddhism, *mui* refers to the uncreated *nirvāṇa.*

In Chinese, *wúwéi* refers to the Unconditioned, to absolute Reality. Buddhist texts from the earliest times have speculated on where the Buddha came from, where he went when he died, and where he is now, since he is said to be constantly in the world. *Chán* master Fóguāng Rúmǎn (*c.*752–842) of the *Hóngzhōu* school is said to have answered these questions with the observation that he comes from and returns to the absolute, unconditioned Reality:

> The *buddha* comes from the Unconditioned *(wúwéi),* and after his passing away he goes back to the Unconditioned *(wúwéi).* The *dharma*-body (Reality body) is like empty space – it is constantly present when there is no-mind *(wúxīn).* When there is thought, it returns to no-thought *(wúniàn),* and when there is abode, it returns to no-abode *(wúzhù).* When coming, he comes for the sake of living beings, and when leaving he leaves for the sake of living beings. The pure ocean of Suchness *(Zhēnrú)* is transparent and its essence abides forever. The wise ones think about it thoughtfully, and then do not give rise to any doubts about it.
>
> *Fóguāng Rúmǎn, Jīngdé chuándēng lù 6, T51 2076:249a5–8, in OMWH pp.68–69*

The Sanskrit *dharma* (Pa. *dhamma*) is a word with many meanings. In the present context, it is a 'something' or a 'phenomenon'. Of the eighty-two *dhammas* listed in the analytical *Theravāda Abhidhamma* texts, only *nibbāna* is accepted as *asankhata. Nibbāna* is neither caused, nor is it the cause of anything; everything else is conditioned, subject to change, transient, and caused. It is hence known as the *asankhata-dhātu* (unconditioned element).

The number of *dharmas* regarded as unconditioned varies from school to school, but the three most commonly mentioned are space *(ākāsha)* and two forms of *nirvāṇa – pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha* (cessation by analysis) and *apratisaṃkhyā-nirodha* (cessation without analysis). The *Sarvāstivāda* school, for instance, lists seventy-five *dharmas,* of which only these three are deemed *asaṃskṛita.*

Space is a pure *dharma* because it causes no hindrance to matter, nor does it displace matter. Empty space is also delimited by form, but has no intrinsic form. Like a hole in a wall, empty space is defined by the wall, not by space itself. For these two reasons, it is regarded as unconditioned.

Pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha is the conscious elimination of some mental function *(dharma)* or impurity *(klesha)* by means of insight and analysis of that

dharma. It is believed that all unwholesome *dharmas* can be overcome by this method. *Apratisaṃkhyā-nirodha* is the elimination or absence of some unwholesome *dharma* that has not been occasioned by insight, conscious effort and the intention to get rid of it, but which happens unconsciously in the absence of the conditions necessary for its re-emergence. While the elimination of impurities by means of *pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha* is regarded as permanent because it is arrived at consciously, *apratisaṃkhyā-nirodha,* understood in one way, is regarded as impermanent due to the lack of conscious intention. Dormant impurities may resurface whenever opportune circumstances present themselves. Understood according to the *Vaibhāshika* school, however, in *apratisaṃkhyā-nirodha* the circumstances that would lead to the re-emergence of the impurities are forever suppressed, only able to emerge in a future that never comes, and therefore unable to disturb the present.

Yogāchāra lists one hundred *dharmas,* of which six are deemed to be *asaṃskṛita.* In addition to the standard three, motionlessness *(āniñjya), saṃjñā-vedayita-nirodha* (cessation of cognition and feeling), and *Tathatā* (Suchness) are also included.

Āniñjya (motionlessness) refers to actions that are neutral and create no *karma,* that are neither wholesome nor unwholesome – both of which lead to rebirth in the conditioned realms. *Saṃjñā-vedayita-nirodha* (Pa. *saññā-vedayita-nirodha*) is the state that lies beyond the four immaterial or formless *jhānas* (states of meditative absorption), and is generally understood as *nirvāṇa.* Likewise, *Tathatā* is a *Mahāyāna* term for the ultimate Reality. Analytical texts try to find intellectual differences between these states, although in terms of meditative spiritual experience, they can only refer to a single Reality.

See also: **pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha**, **saññā-vedayita-nirodha**, **Tathatā** (▸1).

asankhārika-citta (Pa) *Lit.* not-induced consciousness *(citta);* a state of mind that arises spontaneously, without deliberation, preparation, premeditation or inducement, either of oneself or others; one of a group of *cittas;* contrasted with *sasankhārika-citta,* a state of mind prompted by prior deliberation, which may have originated from one's own volition and effort or from the instigation, encouragement, or enticement of others; a term explained in the Pali Buddhist *Abhidhamma* (scholastic analysis of the *suttas*).

The notion of prompted *(sasankhārika)* and unprompted *(asankhārika) cittas,* giving rise to prompted or spontaneous acts, probably originated in the *suttas.* In the *Bhumija Sutta* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya,* for instance, the Buddha explains that the only way to be free from bondage to all actions of body, speech, and mind – whether prompted or unprompted – is to attain *nibbāna.*[1]

See also: **citta**.

1. *Saṃyutta Nikāya* 12:25, *Bhumija Sutta, PTSS2* pp.40–41; see also *Anguttara Nikāya* 4:171, *Sañcetanā Sutta, PTSA2* pp.158–59.

asaññā-samāpatti (Pa), **asaṃjñā-samāpatti** (S), **'du shes med pa'i snyoms par 'jug pa** (T), **wúxiāng dìng** (C), **musōjō** (J) *Lit.* non-cognition *(asaññā)* equipoise *(samāpatti);* no-image *(mu-sō)* concentration *(jō);* no-thought *(wúxiāng)* concentration *(dìng);* practising *('jug pa)* in no-thinking *('du shes med)* meditative absorption *(snyom 'jug);* one of a number of terms for states of meditative absorption in which mental activity, perception, cognition and knowing have (at least temporarily) ceased.

The state is variously described by different texts and schools. In some accounts, it is said that the Buddha entered this state for rest or in times of illness. It is also described as similar to *animitta-samāpatti* (unconditioned equipoise), in which the meditator becomes entirely detached from the characteristics *(nimitta)* of materio-mental phenomena, and to *nirodha-samāpatti* (equipoise of cessation) in which mental functions are in abeyance. In other instances, it is depicted as a state that can be mistaken by the unwary for the permanent and ultimate tranquillity and liberation of *nirvāṇa.* Scholarly schools such as *Abhidharma* and *Yogāchāra* have further analysed and classified various states in which the mind is said to be completely free from all activity.

See also: **nirodha-samāpatti**, **samāpatti**, **saññā-vedayita-nirodha**, **wúxīn**.

ascent of the soul The ascent of the soul from the body into the spiritual realms; the soul's ascent towards the Divine; a term used by many Christian, Sufi, and other mystics; also known as the flight of the soul. Metaphorically, God is generally depicted as being 'above', while human beings are here 'below', imprisoned in matter. Therefore, when the soul leaves the body during spiritual practice or in a spontaneous, sometimes-unsought-for experience, it is said to ascend in spiritual flight or transport, accompanied by a sense of tremendous freedom, elation, and blissful intoxication. When the soul leaves the body in a transcendent experience, it is also passing through the experience of death while remaining connected to the body.

Plato (*c.*427–347 BCE) and Plotinus (*c.*205–270 CE) both speak of the soul's ascent to the Divine. In Plato's well-known parable of the underground cave, he describes men held captive with their bodies and heads bound in such a way that they can only see the wall directly in front of them. As a result they can see only the shadows of real objects, cast by the light behind them and dancing on the wall in front of them; and in the absence of any other experience, they mistake the shadows for reality. Even when one of them is

released, it takes him time to realize that what he once thought was real was actually only shadows. He must make the slow and painful ascent up the passage to the cave's entrance, towards the sun and the light of day before he can see the way things are.[1] Even then, it is only slowly and painfully that he realizes the extent of his previous illusions.

Plotinus is referring to this parable, when he speaks of "ancient Greek philosophy which taught … the ascent from the cave and the gradual advance of souls to a truer and truer vision".[2] The soul, he says, is "a divine thing, a fragment as it were of the primal Beauty" – the Good, the Divine – to which the soul must return:

> Therefore, we must ascend again towards the Good, which every soul desires.… And the attainment of It is for those who will take the upward path, focus all their energies upon it, who will divest themselves of all that we have put on in our descent. So … there are purifications and the laying aside of the garments worn before, and the entry in nakedness; until, passing, on the upward way, all that is other than God, each in the solitude of himself shall behold that solitary-dwelling Existence – the Apart, the Unmingled, the Pure, That upon which all things depend, by which all look and live and act and know – the Source of life, of spirit, and of being.
>
> *Plotinus, Enneads 1:6.7; cf. PEC p.24*

And when the soul has begun its travels on the way:

> Then he will often feel the beauty of the saying, "Farewell, I am to you an immortal god,"[3] for he has ascended to the Divine, straining to become like It.
>
> *Plotinus, Enneads 4:7.10; cf. in PAC2 p.138, PEC p.199*

And this, he adds, is an inward journey from the diversity of material forms to the oneness of the divine Essence:

> Purified of all evil in our intention towards the Good, we must ascend to the Essence within ourselves; from many, we must become one.
>
> *Plotinus, Enneads 6:9.3; cf. PEC p.355*

The Hermetic texts (C2nd–3rd CE) repeat the same truth, also explaining that the means of ascent to the divine Source is through the divine *Nous,* who incarnates as a saviour:

> He filled a mighty bowl with the *Nous,* and sent it down, joining a Herald to it, whom He commanded to make this proclamation to the

> hearts of men: "Those hearts that are able, baptize (*lit.* immerse) yourself with the baptism of this bowl – if you have faith that you can ascend to Him that has sent down the bowl; and if you know the purpose for which you have come into being."
>
> *Hermetica 4:4; cf. HAG p.61, HGCH p.15, TGH2 pp.86–87*

Among early Christian writers, Gregory of Nyssa (335–394), steeped in the expressions of Greek mysticism, also writes of the soul's inner ascent, after first shedding the material covering of the body:

> From this light we learn what we must do to stand within the rays of the true Light, for we cannot ascend to that height, where the Light of Truth is seen, with shoes on our feet, that is, unless the dead and earthly covering of skins is removed from the feet of the soul.
>
> *Gregory of Nyssa, Life of Moses 2:22, in OCM p.84*

The unknown Syrian monk (*c.*500) who wrote pseudo-epigraphically as Dionysius the Areopagite, and whose writings influenced centuries of Christian mystical thought, speaks of this steady ascent to the Divine, overcoming all obstacles on the way:

> We ascend, so far as we can follow the Way, to That which is beyond all things, by negating and transcending everything, and by seeking the universal Cause.
>
> *Pseudo-Dionysius, Divine Names 7:3; cf. DNMT p.152, OCM pp.167–68, WDA1 p.91*

Progress, says Peter of Damaskos (*c.*675–749), should be slow and steady, avoiding all distractions:

> We must focus our attention on God, have no concern for this world, and must not be dismayed by any trial or temptation. Starting from this world, we must continually advance, ascending to a higher level of reality. We should not be distracted by anything: neither by dreams, whether evil or seemingly good, nor by the thought of anything, whether good or bad, nor by distress or deceitful joy, nor by self-conceit or despair, nor by depression or elation, nor by a sense of abandonment or by illusory help and strength, nor by negligence or progress, nor by laziness or seeming zeal, nor by apparent dispassion or passionate attachment. Rather with humility we should strive to maintain a state of stillness, free from all distraction, knowing that no one can do us harm unless we ourselves wish for it.
>
> *Peter of Damaskos, Treasury of Divine Knowledge 1, Philokalia, PCT3 p.148*

John of the Cross says likewise:

> He that journeys on the road and makes the ascent to God must be habitually careful to quell and mortify the passions; and the greater the speed with which a soul does this, the sooner will it reach the end of its journey. Until these are quelled, it cannot reach the end, however much it may practise the virtues, since it will be unable to attain to perfection in them.
>
> *John of the Cross, Ascent of Mount Carmel 1:5.6; cf. CWJC1 p.31*

Even so, though the soul may feel that it is striving towards the Divine, it is actually He who is pulling the soul upwards:

> A soul can never attain the knowledge of God unless God Himself in His condescension takes hold of it and raises it up to Himself. For the human mind *(nous)* lacks the power to ascend and to participate in divine illumination, unless God Himself draws it up – insofar as this is possible for the human mind *(nous)* – and illumines it with rays of divine light.
>
> *Maximos the Confessor, On Theology 1:31, Philokalia; cf. PCT2 p.120*

Just as the soul is said to 'ascend' to God, so too is it said that the creation is formed by the divine Word or *Logos* as a 'descent' from Him. It is the attractions of the creation that hold the soul here. Nonetheless, denial of the creation is as negative as attachment to it. What is required is an appreciation of it as it is. Like it, and let it be:

> God creates the world, and this creation is a descent. But man's movement towards God is an ascent. In rising from the created world towards God, the ascetic does not deny the reality and value of the creation. All he does is not to regard it as an absolute, not to deify it or consider it an end and a value in itself. God did not create the world in order to live the life of the creature: He created it in order to associate man with His own divine life.
>
> *Archimandrite Sophrony, Monk of Mount Athos, MMA p.99*

The descent from God of the *Logos* and various other lesser powers, and the ascent of the soul to Him are common themes in gnostic literature too. Many texts contain descriptions of the soul's ascent to God. In the *Nature of the Rulers,* the saviour (the "true man") comes to the souls held captive in this world, to whom he gives the Seed of the divine Word, the "Oil of Eternal Life":

> Then he will teach them about everything; and he will anoint them with the Oil of Eternal Life. . . . Then they will be freed from blind thought,

> and they will trample death under foot.… And they will ascend into the limitless Light, where this sown element belongs.
>
> *Nature of the Rulers 97; cf. NHS20 pp.258–59*

Manichaean texts also speak of the ascension of the soul:

> I rejoice as I ascend to my Father
> with whom I have conquered in the land of the darkness:
> O my great King, ferry me to the city of the gods, the angels.
>
> *Manichaean Psalm Book CCXLIII, MPB p.50*

And again in the Mandaean literature:

> Rise up, rise up, O soul!
> Ascend to your first homeland.
> Rise up, rise up to your first homeland,
> the place from which you were transplanted.
>
> *Mandaean Prayer Book 94; cf. CPM p.97*

See also: **ascension** (8.4), **dying while living** (8.3), **flight of the soul**.

1. Plato, *Republic* 7:514a–518b.
2. Plotinus, *Enneads* 2:9.6, *PEC* p.68.
3. Empedoclēs, *Fragment* 112.

āshraya (S), **gnas** (T), **suǒyī** (C), **sho´e** (J) *Lit.* support, foundation; that upon which something rests or depends; sometimes used synonymously with *ālaya-vijñāna* (storehouse of consciousness), a concept developed by the *Yogāchāra* school of Buddhism. *Āshraya* is used in other contexts, especially in the *Abhidharma* literature, where the meaning is that of general 'support' or 'foundation'. See **ālaya-vijñāna**, **āshraya-parāvṛitti**.

āshraya-parāvṛitti (S), **gnas yongs su 'gyur pa** (T), **zhuǎnyí** (C), **ten´e** (J) *Lit.* transformation *(parāvṛitti, zhuǎnyí)* of the foundation *(āshraya, gnas);* turning back, returning, change, inversion or reversion of the basis; complete *(yongs su)* transformation *('gyur)* of the foundation *(gnas),* fundamental transmutation; transformation of an impure state into a pure state; the return of the mind to a state of pure, primal consciousness; a concept developed by the *Yogāchāra* school of Buddhism, where *āshraya* is sometimes used synonymously with *ālaya-vijñāna* (storehouse of consciousness); hence, transformation of the *ālaya-vijñāna.*

According to *Yogāchāra* philosophy, the *āshraya* or *ālaya-vijñāna* retains the impressions and karmic seeds of events and thoughts from an individual's present life, which subsequently manifest as the *karma* and personal experience of future births. Over time, the *āshraya* becomes the storehouse of the impressions and karmic seeds from a myriad of past lives. Enlightenment implies the cleansing of all this debris, which comes in a sudden event known in *Yogāchāra* as *āshraya-parāvṛitti.* This transformation is said to eliminate all karmic seeds and impressions, freeing the aspiring *bodhisattva* from their influence. At this time, the *āshraya* or *ālaya-vijñāna* is transformed into or replaced by a *buddha*'s perfect 'mirror-like awareness *(ādarsha-jñāna)*' in which everything is reflected as it truly is, without bias, prejudice, or personal perspective. Some later elaborations of the concept describe this purified *ālaya-vijñāna* as a ninth 'immaculate consciousness *(amala-vijñāna)*'. This essential or intrinsic nature is also called the *buddhadhātu* (*buddha*-element, *buddha*-essence, *buddha*-principle) or *tathāgata-garbha* (embryo of buddhahood), which are both loosely referred to as the inherent *buddha*-nature that is present within every inanimate object and every sentient being.

Peter Harvey explains that *parāvṛitti* is a mental about-face that suddenly brings the mind that was previously turned towards consciousness of sensory data into direct confrontation with the reality of the *āshraya* or *ālaya-vijñāna.* The mind *(manas)* in this context is the seventh *vijñāna* of the *Yogāchāra* description, the afflicted mind *(klishṭa-manas)* that sees the *ālaya-vijñāna,* but mistakes it for a separate self:

> The path to *nirvāṇa* is a gradual development of virtue, meditative concentration, and insight into the emptiness of 'other-dependent' phenomena. The final attainment comes suddenly, however, as a momentous spiritual transition, a shattering upheaval which takes place at the root of the mind – in *ālaya* in its form as *manas.* This event is known as the 'reversal of the basis *(āshraya-parāvṛitti)*'. It is where the usual flow of the worldly mind suddenly stops, so that the six sensory consciousnesses no longer present information. Having stopped discriminating 'objects' in the flow of the six consciousnesses, *manas* 'turns round' from these and attains direct intuitive knowledge of *ālaya* as its basis. Due to this, *ālaya* is no longer capable of carrying karmic seeds, the source of the consciousness of objects, as its deluding nature is seen through. The intuition thus penetrates to the non-dual depths of *ālaya,* the *Dharma*-realm which is ultimate Reality, so that everything is seen as 'thought only', in the highest sense. In the mirror of *manas,* the unknowing *ālaya* has gained knowledge of its inner nature, so that *nirvāṇa* is the *ālaya*-consciousness which is realized inwardly, after a reversal has taken place.[1] *Nirvāṇa,* then, is

> the transfiguration of *saṃsāra,* not its abolition: … "There is no difference between *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa.*"[2]
>
> *Peter Harvey, An Introduction to Buddhism, IBTS pp.136–37*

The abstruse and esoteric nature of the concepts associated with the *āshraya* or *ālaya-vijñāna* have given rise to a variety of interpretations and discussions, both in ancient texts as well as among modern scholars. Such is the nature of concepts, which at best can only describe something of the nature of an experience that is essentially indescribable. D.T. Suzuki, for instance, in his explanation of the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra,* interprets the *āshraya-parāvṛitti* as a religious or spiritual conversion or change of heart that is more of a psychological event than spiritual enlightenment:

> *Parāvṛitti* literally means 'turning up' or 'turning back' or 'change'; technically, it is a spiritual change or transformation which takes place in the mind, especially suddenly, … which … somewhat corresponds to what is known as 'conversion' among the psychological students of religion.
>
> *D.T. Suzuki, Lankavatara Sutra, LSMT pp.xvii–xviii*

Translating *parāvṛitti* as 'revulsion', he also points out that although the *parāvṛitti* is portrayed as sudden, it only happens after a long period of striving. "The unconscious process that preceded it may have been gradual, but as far as his conscious mind is concerned, the revulsion *(parāvṛitti)* has taken place instantaneously."[3] The nature of enlightenment as a sudden or gradual experience is another matter that has been the subject of considerable discussion, disagreement and even schism in the history of Buddhism and its many schools, especially in the Far East.

See also: **ālaya-vijñāna**, **amala-vijñāna**.

1. *Lankāvatāra Sūtra* 2:18, *LSBN* p.62.
2. *Lankāvatāra Sūtra* 2:18, *LSBN* p.61.
3. D.T. Suzuki, *Studies in the Lankavatara Sutra, SLSS* p.207 (n.1).

ashṭa-vimoksha (S), **aṭṭha-vimokkha** (Pa), **rnam par thar pa brgyad** (T), **bā jiětuō** (C), **hachi gedatsu** (J) *Lit.* eight *(ashṭa, brgyad, bā, hachi)* liberations *(vimoksha, rnam par thar pa, jiětuō, gedatsu);* eight stages of increasingly deep meditation that represent progressive degrees of liberation from *saṃsāra* (transmigration), as the meditator passes through and transcends the four lower and four higher *jhānas* (states of meditative absorption), finally reaching

cessation of knowing and feeling *(saññā-vedayita-nirodha)* – the cessation of all sensory and mental activity, gross and subtle – which implies *nibbāna.*

Progression through the *aṭṭha-vimokkha* is outlined in the *Mahānidāna* and several other *suttas.*[1] The eight stages, especially the first three, are enigmatically and cryptically portrayed, but by reference to similar descriptions in the Pali *suttas* of ascent through the *jhānas,* it can be inferred that the first three refer to passage through the increasingly subtle realms of *rūpaloka* (world of forms, patterns, or archetypes). The next four stages are a standard description of passage through the four *arūpāyatana* (formless realms) of *arūpaloka* (formless world), stages that became identified in the *Abhidhamma* (systematic analysis of the Pali *suttas*) as the four higher *jhānas.* The Buddhist philosopher Nāgārjuna (*c.*150–250), summarizing the *Abhidhamma* texts, also analyses the eight *vimokkhas* in a similar manner.[2] *Rūpaloka* and *arūpaloka* would seem to correspond to the astral and higher realms of Western terminology.

The final stage in which all knowing and all subtle feeling or sensation ceases is *nibbāna.* As the Buddha concludes, "When once a monk attains these eight liberations", there is nothing "higher or more sublime than this", an observation repeated in several other places.[3] According to the *Mahānidāna Sutta:*

> There are eight liberations *(aṭṭha-vimokkha).* What are they?
>
> **1**. Possessing form *(rūpa),* one sees forms *(rūpāni).* That is the first liberation *(vimokkha),* (*i.e.* perceiving oneself as possessing form, one also perceives subtle forms external to oneself in the realm of subtle materiality).
>
> **2**. Unaware of form *(rūpa)* within oneself, one sees forms *(rūpāni)* outside. That is the second liberation *(vimokkha),* (*i.e.* one experiences oneself as formless, yet perceives forms external to oneself).
>
> **3**. Experiencing loveliness, one becomes focused upon it. That is the third liberation *(vimokkha),* (*i.e.* the subtlety of seemingly external forms merges with the formless beauty within oneself, and one becomes absorbed in that).
>
> **4**. By completely transcending all awareness of form *(rūpa-saññā),* with the disappearance of the awareness of sense-responses and by not heeding awareness of diversity, thinking: "Space is boundless", one enters and abides in the realm of boundless space *(ākāsānañcāyatana).* That is the fourth liberation *(vimokkha).*

5. By transcending the realm of boundless space, thinking: "Consciousness is boundless", one enters and abides in the realm of boundless consciousness *(viññāṇañcāyatana).* That is the fifth liberation *(vimokkha).*

6. By transcending the realm of boundless consciousness, thinking: "There is no-thing," one enters and abides in the realm of no-thingness *(ākiñcaññāyatana).* That is the sixth liberation *(vimokkha).*

7. By transcending the realm of no-thingness, one reaches and abides in the realm of neither-knowing-nor-not-knowing *(nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana).* That is the seventh liberation *(vimokkha).*

8. By transcending the realm of neither-knowing-nor-not-knowing, one enters and abides in the cessation of knowing and feeling *(saññā-vedayita-nirodha).* That is the eighth liberation *(vimokkha).*

Dīgha Nikāya 15, Mahānidāna Sutta, PTSD2 pp.70–71; cf. DNVS, TBLD p.230

See also: **abhibhāyatana** (8.5), **kasiṇa** (8.5), **vimoksha**.

1. *E.g. Anguttara Nikāya* 8:66 *(Vimokkha Sutta), PTSA4* p.306; *Dīgha Nikāya* 16 *(Mahāparinibbāna Sutta),* 33 *(Sangīti Sutta), PTSD2* pp.111–12, *PTSD3* pp.261–62; *Majjhima Nikāya* 77 *(Mahāsakuludāyi Sutta), PTSM2* pp.12–13.
2. Nāgārjuna, *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Shāstra* 34, *T25* 1509:215a–16a, *TVW3* pp.1057–64.
3. *E.g. Majjhima Nikāya* 31, *Cūlagosinga Sutta, PTSM1* p.209, *MDBB* p.304.

astral projection A spontaneous or deliberately induced out-of-the-body experience (OBE), in which a person 'travels' in the astral body; a term probably coined by early theosophists or others of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many of the world's religious and spiritual traditions have described experiences in which the soul leaves the body, either travelling in the material world or venturing into the spiritual realms. While the existence of the experience is not disputed, scientists and others have suggested other explanations based upon brain function.

The expression is used for two different categories of experience. To some, especially among the early users of the term, astral projection meant experiences in the astral worlds, which include the various heavens, hells and other afterlife worlds, which are to be found by going within the body. To others, however, it refers to out-of-the-body travel in the material world.

Since, strictly speaking, the latter experience has little to do with the astral world, theosophists such as C.W. Leadbeater (1854–1934) and Annie Besant (1847–1933), designated it 'etheric travel' or 'etheric projection'. Here, the soul (and mind) moves about the material world in a subtle, ghostly or etheric form, a form or body that is less subtle than the corresponding astral form. In modern times, it is this phenomenon that is most widely known as astral projection.

Hundreds of reports of such experiences – both astral and etheric – have been published in books, especially during the 1960s and 70s, some of which describe techniques designed to consciously induce them.

In the introduction to his *Projection of the Astral Body,* astral projector Hereward Carrington (1880–1958) distinguishes between OBEs and astral projection. Whereas the astral body may withdraw from the physical body automatically and involuntarily in trance, fainting, under anaesthetic and so forth, an astral projector can 'will' the astral body to leave the physical body by conscious voluntary effort:

> He is then fully alert and conscious in his astral body; he can look upon his own physical mechanism, and travel about at will, perhaps viewing scenes and visiting places he has never seen before. Subsequently, he can verify the truth of these experiences by visiting the scenes or places in question. While fully conscious in the astral body, he seems to be possessed of extraordinary, supernormal powers. He can, at will, return to his physical body, or may be drawn into it again automatically by reason of some shock, fright, or vivid emotion.
>
> The astral and the physical bodies are invariably connected by means of a sort of cord, or cable, along which vital currents pass. Should this cord be severed, death instantly results. The only difference between astral projection and death is that the cord is intact in the former case, and severed in the latter. This cord – 'the silver cord' spoken of in *Ecclesiastes*[1] – is 'elastic' and capable of great extension. It constitutes the essential link between the two bodies.
>
> *Hereward Carrington, Introduction, Projection of the Astral Body, PABM p.16*

See also: **avasthā**, **lucid dreaming**, **near-death experience** (8.3), **out-of-the-body experience**, **sleep paralysis**.

1. *Ecclesiastes* 12:6, *KJV.*

ātmabodha, **ātmavidyā**, **ātmajñāna**, **ātmadarshana** (S), **ātmagyān** (H), **ātam gyān** (Pu) *Lit.* knowledge *(bodha, gyān, jñāna, vidyā)* of the self or soul *(ātmā,*

ātman); vision or direct perception *(darshana)* of the self; self-realization, self-knowledge, gnosis of the soul; science *(vidyā)* of the self or soul *(ātmā).* An *ātmajñānī* is one who has realized that he is the *ātman;* who does not identify himself with his body and mind, but knows that he is pure *ātman.* This is not an intellectual assertion, but an advanced mystic experience that takes the soul into the realms of the pure spirit. The teaching of *ātmajñāna* is given in the *Upanishads,* where knowledge of the *ātman* is understood to be knowledge of *Brahman.* "He who knows the supreme *Brahman* becomes *Brahman.*"[1]

Following the teaching of the *Upanishads,* the ninth-century philosopher-mystic Shankara wrote a treatise entirely on the nature of *ātmabodha,* which he called by that name. At the beginning of this short book he says that *ātmabodha* destroys ignorance and leads to liberation:

> Just as fire is the means of cooking, so is gnosis *(jñāna),* and no other discipline, the means of liberation *(moksha);* for liberation *(moksha)* cannot be attained without knowledge *(bodha).*
>
> Action cannot dispel ignorance *(avidyā),* for it is not in conflict with ignorance *(avidyā).* Knowledge *(vidyā)* alone dispels ignorance *(avidyā),* just as light dispels deep darkness.
>
> The self *(ātmā)* appears finite only because of ignorance *(ajñāna).* When ignorance *(ajñāna)* is dispelled, the self *(ātmā),* which does not admit of any multiplicity, truly reveals itself by itself, like the sun when the clouds clear.
>
> *Shankara, Ātmabodha 2–4*

In a commentary on the *Bhagavad Gītā,* he also writes:

> The mind, refined by subjugation of the body, the mind and the senses, and equipped with the teaching of the scriptures and the teacher *(āchārya),* forms the instrument by which there is direct perception of the self *(ātmadarshana).*
>
> *Shankara, Commentary 2:21 on Bhagavad Gītā; cf. in PU p.278*

In his *Yoga Sūtras,* Patañjali says that such self-realization *(ātmadarshana)* arises from attunement to the quality of *sattva,* a term with no precise English equivalent, but encompassing harmony, the utter truthfulness of Reality, and the purity of being:

> From firm establishment in the purity of *sattva,*
> arises cheerfulness, one-pointedness, control of the senses,
> and fitness for the direct perception of the soul *(ātmadarshana).*
>
> *Patañjali, Yoga Sūtras 2:41*

In his *Vivekachūḍāmaṇi,* Shankara repeats much the same, using the term *Paramātma-darshana* (vision of the supreme Self).[2]

Later Indian mystics have largely agreed with the principle expressed in the *Upanishads.* Charandās writes:

> If you know the secret of the *Vedas,*
> you will realize that without self-realization *(ātam gyān)*
> there is no salvation.
>
> *Charandās, Bānī 1, Shabd 13:1, CDB1 p.52*

And Kabīr adds:

> Those who do not attain self-knowledge *(ātam gyān)*
> are drowned in the ocean of existence.
>
> *Kabīr, Akhrāvatī, Chaupāī 3:5, KSA p.4*

Saints, however, have also taught that true self-realization of the soul only comes when the soul goes beyond the realms of the universal mind – the level which would seem to be the meaning of *Brahman,* as the *Upanishads* describe it. In the terminology of Indian saints, this higher realm has been called *parbrahm* or *daswān dwār.*

See also: **ātman** (5.1), **Brahman** (2.1).

1. *Muṇḍaka Upanishad* 3:2.9.
2. Shankara, *Vivekachūḍāmaṇi* 335; *cf. Vivekachūḍāmaṇi* 353.

atta-diṭṭhi (Pa), **ātma-dṛishṭi** (S) *Lit.* self *(ātman)* view *(dṛishṭi);* belief that the self has an enduring existence; synonymous with *sakkāya-diṭṭhi* (identity view). See **sakkāya-diṭṭhi**.

attention Concentrated focus of the mind on something; spiritually, the concentrated focus of one's inner being in prayer, meditation, or contemplation – that which is focused consisting primarily of the mental faculties of thinking, visualizing, and listening.

Though philosophers and mystics may distinguish between the mind and the soul or the mind and the spirit, or may use any other analysis to describe and imply a distinction between a person's cognitive faculties and his eternal essence, others find no need to distinguish between them. For all practical purposes, the combination of the two is experienced as attention, and it is

this that is engaged in interior prayer, contemplation, or spiritual meditation, or indeed upon any other task.

For most people, however, this attention flits unconsciously from one thing to another in an endless stream of scattered thoughts and images. Consequently, the first efforts of a spiritual aspirant are directed towards becoming conscious of the attention, and what is keeping it occupied, and then – by degrees – redirecting it towards an inner focus. Therefore, all forms of prayer, meditation or spiritual life begin by learning to control and direct the attention.

Christian mystics have all spoken of the need for concentrated, focused attention as a prerequisite for prayer:

> God desires that when we pray, we should do so with our whole attention.
>
> *Angela of Foligno, Book of Divine Consolation 2:20; cf. BDC p.101*

And:

> Without attention prayer is not prayer. It is dead! It is useless, soul-harming babbling.
>
> *Ignatius Brianchaninov, On the Prayer of Jesus 8, OPJ pp.61–62*

First the attention should be withdrawn from the body and its senses; then from all thoughts concerning external activity; then directed towards feeling the inner presence of the Divine, by whatever name It may be called:

> Withdraw your thoughts from your bodily senses, so that you pay no attention to what you hear, see, or feel; for your heart must not be fixed on these things. After this, exclude from your mind all material images, and all thought of your former activities and those of other people. This requires little interior discipline when you enjoy the grace of devotion; but you must also do this when you feel no devotion, and this is very much harder. Direct your whole intention and purpose to the Lord Jesus, desiring to seek, feel, or find nothing except the grace and presence of Jesus. This requires great effort, for vain thoughts throng into your mind to divert your attention to them.
>
> *Walter Hilton, Ladder of Perfection 1:52, LPH pp.63–64*

If the attention is fixed solely upon God, then nothing can disturb the mind:

> If my attention were fixed on God alone, … then nothing whatsoever would bother me, and I should not be easily distressed.
>
> *Meister Eckhart, Sermons 68, STE2 p.158*

When the attention is fully recollected within, it reaches a state of rest or repose which is so natural as to be effortless:

> When the soul is inwardly recollected, . . . in God or in His presence, it occasionally becomes so secretly attentive to its Beloved's goodness, as to give the appearance of scarcely being attentive at all – so artless its attention, so unobtrusive. Calm, smoothly flowing rivers give a similar impression to those who watch them or sail upon them.
>
> *François de Sales, Love of God 6:8, LGFS pp.239–40*

It might be imagined that a person whose attention is turned effortlessly towards God in prayer or meditation might have difficulty relating to outward things and people. In fact, the reverse is true. The habit of concentrated attention is beneficial both outwardly and inwardly. In his biography of Plotinus, his disciple Porphyry recalls that if his master was interrupted when involved in some concentrated thought process while writing something intricate, he could nevertheless "fulfil the obligations of conversation" without losing track of what he had been doing. After the person had left, he would then pick up where he had left off, "as if no time had elapsed from the time when he was carrying out the conversation. Thus, he was simultaneously present both to himself and to others."[1]

See also: **attentiveness**, **awareness**.

1. Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus* 8, in *PPH* pp.85–86.

attentiveness (Gk. *prosochē*) In a spiritual context, watchfulness, alertness, vigilance, or mindfulness; constant awareness of what one is thinking and doing; keeping watch over one's inward thoughts and fantasies; guarding the heart from negativity; keeping the mind attentive during prayer; constant awareness of one's own essential being; constant awareness of the being of God. In practical terms, as Bernard of Clairvaux puts it, "In every place, you must be attentive to your inward state."[1] Or as Isaiah the Solitary says: "Be attentive to yourself, so that nothing destructive can separate you from the love of God."[2] And as Hēsychios the Priest summarizes: "attentiveness enriches the soul".[3]

All moments of life have one common factor – the present moment. The whole of human life is passed in the present moment. Get the present moment right, and the whole of life becomes right. The crux of the matter lies in what a person's attention is doing in the present moment. To be watchful and aware of the present moment, the attention has to be focused in it. Therefore, the author of the *Cloud of Unknowing* advises, "Be attentive to time, and the way you spend it."[4]

The attention is not only to be focused in the present moment; the same writer describes at length how the attention must also be focused on the simple awareness of one's own being, which is where God is to be found. Even analytical thoughts concerning the nature of God distract the attention away from the present moment, and from the awareness of God and one's own inner being. Thinking about the nature of God or the soul or any such thing is different from the actual awareness of His presence.[5]

Watchfulness and attentiveness are keynotes of the two great Christian contemplative traditions – the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches. The two are often used interchangeably; if there is a difference, it is that watchfulness (Gk. *nēpsis*) is more commonly applied to a careful and constant awareness of the thoughts that pass through the mind in daily life, while attentiveness (Gk. *prosochē*) is the concentrated focus of the mind in prayer – hence, the related expression 'attentive prayer', applied especially to the Jesus prayer, also known as the prayer of the heart.

The early fathers whose writings are collected together in the *Philokalia* quoted two biblical texts from the *Septuagint.* The first is from *Exodus:* "Watch yourself attentively,"[6] and the second from *Deuteronomy:* "Be attentive to yourself, lest there arise in your heart a secret thing that is an iniquity."[7] The two extracts, though taken out of their original context by the fathers, exemplify the meaning of watchfulness and attentiveness. Hēsychios the Priest adds:

> The phrase "a secret thing" refers to the first appearance of an evil thought. This the fathers call a provocation introduced into the heart by the devil. As soon as this thought appears in our mind *(nous),* our own thoughts chase after it and enter into impassioned intercourse with it.
>
> Watchfulness is a way of embracing every virtue, every commandment. It is the heart's stillness and, when free from mental images, it is the guardian of the mind *(nous).*
>
> *Hēsychios the Priest, On Watchfulness 2–3, Philokalia; cf. PCT1 pp.162–63*

Speaking of the Jesus prayer, in which the attention is fixed in the heart and on the breathing with the help of a simple, continuously repeated prayer, Hēsychios the Priest distinguishes between attentiveness and watchfulness:

> Attentiveness is the heart's stillness, unbroken by any thought. In this stillness the heart breathes and invokes, endlessly and without ceasing, only Jesus Christ. . . .
>
> Watchfulness is a continual fixing and halting of thought at the entrance to the heart. In this way predatory and murderous thoughts are marked down as they approach and what they say and do is noted.
>
> *Hēsychios the Priest, On Watchfulness 5–6, Philokalia, PCT1 p.163*

The two are close companions of the spiritual life of the Orthodox monk:

> Watchfulness and the Jesus prayer, as I have said, mutually reinforce one another; for close attentiveness goes with constant prayer, while prayer goes with close watchfulness and attentiveness of intellect.
>
> *Hēsychios the Priest, On Watchfulness 94, Philokalia, PCT1 p.178*

Attentiveness in prayer is essential, for without it, the mind wanders aimlessly:

> If you seek prayer attentively you will find it; for nothing is more essential to prayer than attentiveness. So do all you can to acquire it.
>
> *Evagrios Pontikos, On Prayer 149, Philokalia, PCT1 p.71*

When the mind is attentive, it experiences more light and greater longing:

> The more closely attentive you are to your mind, the greater the longing with which you will pray to Jesus; and the more carelessly you examine your mind, the further you will separate yourself from him. Just as close attentiveness brilliantly illumines the mind, so the lapse from watchfulness and from the sweet invocation of Jesus will darken it completely.
>
> *Hēsychios the Priest, On Watchfulness 90, Philokalia, PCT1 p.177*

Attentiveness leads to spiritual uplift and wisdom:

> The life of attentiveness … is the father of contemplation and spiritual knowledge. Linked to humility, it engenders divine exaltation and thoughts of the wisest kind.
>
> *Hēsychios the Priest, On Watchfulness 147, Philokalia, PCT1 pp.187–88*

Attentiveness implies maintaining purity of mind, since it is impure thoughts that distract the mind:

> So far as you can, do nothing simply to gain the esteem or goodwill of others, and never bear ill will towards your brother, lest you separate yourself from God. Strive to keep your mind undistracted, always being attentive to your inner thoughts.
>
> *On Abba Philēmon, Philokalia, PCT2 p.351*

Despite a person's best efforts, the events of life can nevertheless disturb mental equilibrium:

> An unexpected event or misfortune considerably disrupts the mind's attentiveness; and, by dislodging the mind *(nous)* from its concentration

> on higher realities and from its noble state of virtue, it diverts it towards sinful quarrelsomeness and wrangling.
>
> *Philotheos of Sinai, On Watchfulness 39, Philokalia; cf. PCT3 p.31*

The ideal of constant attentiveness *(prosochē)* was a fundamental attitude of the Stoic sage, who attempted always to find the will of God in daily life. The same ideal is found in Plotinus, though directed, perhaps, in a more interior and contemplative manner. According to Porphyry, Plotinus' "attentiveness towards himself never relaxed for a moment".[8]

See also: **attention**, **watchfulness**.

1. Bernard of Clairvaux, *On the Song of Songs* 9:3, *WBC1* p.56.
2. Isaiah the Solitary, *On Guarding the Spirit* 22, *Philokalia, PCT1* p.26.
3. Hēsychios the Priest, *On Watchfulness and Holiness* 30, *Philokalia, PCT1* p.167.
4. *Cloud of Unknowing* 4, *CU* p.42.
5. *Cloud of Unknowing, Book of Privy Counselling, passim.*
6. *Exodus* 23:21, *LXX.*
7. *Deuteronomy* 15:9, *LXX.*
8. Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus* 8; *cf. PPH* p.82.

āvajjana (Pa), **āvarjana** (S) *Lit.* turning the attention towards; heedfulness of, reflecting upon, paying attention to, apprehending; adverting the mind to some object; from *āvajjeti* (to observe, to take notice, to turn the attention towards); in Pali Buddhist texts, turning the mind towards something.

Āvajjana-vasī is the first of the five *vasīs* (masteries). According to the *Abhidhamma* (analytical systematization of the Pali *suttas*) and allied literature, five kinds of mastery are associated with each of the *jhānas* (states of meditative absorption). Essentially, they refer to a meditator's unhindered ability to turn his attention towards *(āvajjana),* to enter, to remain in, to emerge from, and to review his experience of the *jhānas.*[1]

Āvajjana-citta is also part of a model, first elaborated in the commentaries to the Pali *suttas,* that depicts the process of cognition – the thought process *(citta-vīthi)* by which something arises in consciousness – as comprising seventeen stages or 'thought moments *(cittakkhaṇa* or *citta)*'.

The adverting thought moment *(āvajjana-citta)* is the moment at which the mind turns towards and attends to a stimulus or object that has impinged upon either the five sense doors or the mind door. At this stage, the attention is simply turned to the stimulus, without further cognitive action such as recognition or reaction. The stimulus is like a knock on the door that has yet to be answered. If the stimulus is a physical sense object, the thought moment

is called a five-door advertence *(pañca-dvārāvajjana);* if it is a mental object, such as a desire, then it is called a mind-door advertence *(mano-dvārāvajjana).*

See also: **bhavanga**, **cittakkhaṇa**, **vasī** (8.5).

1. See *e.g.* Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 23:27, *PTSV* p.704.

avasthā (S/H), **awasthā** (Pu) *Lit.* state, condition, status, situation, position, circumstance; period, age, life.

According to traditional Indian culture, there are four stages *(avasthās)* in human life – childhood, youth, middle age, and old age. As Sahajobāī (C18th) writes:

> Between birth and death,
> you pass through four stages *(avasthā).*
> *Sahajobāī, Bānī, Janma dashā 66, SBB p.21*

And:

> Beyond eighty you are in old age *(birdh avasthā).*
> nothing is certain about tomorrow.
> The rest of life has been wasted:
> three stages *(avasthā)* have already gone,
> now the fourth dull one has come.
> You have reached old age *(birdh avasthā),*
> but even then, O blind man, you are not (spiritually) awake.
> *Sahajobāī, Bānī, Bṛidhavasthā 82–83, SBB p.25*

Mystically, the term is used for states of consciousness. Classical Indian philosophy defines four such states:

1. *Jāgrat avasthā.* The outwardly conscious waking state when the mind is aware of the outer world of the gross physical senses; also called *jāgrat sthāna* (waking state) and *vishva* or *vaishvānara.*

2. *Svapna avasthā.* The semi-conscious dream state, when the mind projects its own images within itself, and attention is focused at the throat centre; also called *svapna sthāna* (dream state) and *taijasa* (consisting of light).

3. *Sushupti avasthā, sushupta avasthā.* The unconscious state of deep dreamless sleep, in which neither the self *(aham)* nor the mind are active, and the sleeper is aware neither of his body nor of the external world; also called

sushupta sthāna (state of deep sleep). The consciousness of the sleeper in this state – utterly unaware of everything, an undifferentiated "mass of consciousness *(prajñā-naghanaḥ)*",[1] unable to discriminate one thing from another, yet in a state of unconscious bliss – is known as *prājña* (relating to wisdom, wisdom-like). Yet because the sleeper is unconscious, this state is quite different from the higher, transcendental wisdom *(prajñā).*

4. *Turīya avasthā.* Literally, the fourth state, since it is more spiritually elevated than the other three states of consciousness; superconsciousness, experienced in deep meditation *(samādhi);* a transcendent consciousness beyond thought, causality and identification with the body or mind; also called *nirvikalpa* (without change) and *asamprajñāta* (without anything known) *samādhi.*

The first three states are related to centres *(chakras)* within the human body, and the degree of consciousness depends upon the *chakra* at which the attention is focused. The unconscious state of deep sleep is the lowest state of consciousness and is associated with the heart and navel centres *(hṛidaya* and *maṇipūraka chakras).* The semi-conscious dream state is identified with the throat centre *(vishuddha chakra).* The outwardly conscious waking state relates to the eye centre *(ājñā chakra).* As the attention rises from the lower to the higher centres within the body, the degree of consciousness goes on increasing and the individual passes from deep sleep *(sushupti avasthā)* to dreaming *(svapna avasthā)* to waking *(jāgrat avasthā).* However, in the waking state the attention rapidly dissipates from its headquarters at the eye centre through the sensory and motor functions of the body, and thus into the material world.

The fourth, superconscious, state of *turīya* begins when the attention withdraws from the material world, focuses at the eye centre, and then rises above the eyes. Consciousness then continues to expand as the soul rises through the subastral, astral and causal realms, past the universal mind, and onwards to the divine Eternity. Some mystics have also described an additional state, *sahaj avasthā,* which refers to the state of complete balance, peace, bliss, and utter equipoise of Eternity.

This eternal, unchanging, motionless and transcendent Principle behind the ever-changing phenomena of the material universe was described by the sages who wrote the *Upanishads.* They called It *Brahman.* Looking within themselves, they discovered an immutable element at the heart of the seemingly unending flux of sensations, feelings, and thoughts that comprise human existence. This they called the *Ātman* (Self), superior to all the activities of mind and body but, at the same time, a silent and constant witness to them. They realized that this *Ātman* was identified with *Brahman,* but had mistakenly identified itself with the body, mind, senses, and the false ego.

In their enquiry into the nature of the self, the *Upanishads* identify three states of consciousness of the illusory self – the waking state *(jāgrat avasthā, jāgrat sthāna),* the dream state *(svapna avasthā, svapna sthāna),* and the state of deep sleep *(sushupti, sushupta avasthā, sushupta sthāna).* Transcending these is the state of pure consciousness, which is known simply as the fourth *(turīya).*

Asserting the identity of the *Ātman* with *Brahman* and the mystic syllable *Auṃ,* the *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad* briefly describes these four states:

> This syllable *(akshara) Auṃ* is all this (*i.e.* the entire universe). A further explanation is this: all that is past, present, and future is indeed *Auṃ;* and whatever else there is, beyond the threefold time – that too is *Auṃ.*
>
> Truly, all this is *Brahman.* This *Ātman* is *Brahman.* This *Ātman* has four aspects *(pādas).*
>
> The first aspect *(pāda)* is *vaishvānara* (common to all men), to which belongs the waking state *(jāgrat sthāna),* which is outwardly conscious, which has seven limbs and nineteen mouths, and which is the experiencer of gross objects.
>
> The second aspect *(pāda)* is *taijasa* (brilliant, luminous), to which belongs the dream state *(svapna sthāna),* which is inwardly conscious, which has seven limbs and nineteen mouths, and which is the experiencer of subtle objects.
>
> Where one feels no desire and sees no dream – that is deep sleep *(sushupta).* This third aspect *(pāda)* is *prājña,* to which belongs the state of deep sleep *(sushupta sthāna)* wherein all is one *(eki-bhūta),* which is truly a mass of consciousness *(prajñā-naghanaḥ),* which is full of bliss and enjoying bliss…
>
> The fourth *(chaturtha, i.e. turīya)* is not that which cognizes the subjective (*i.e.* dreams), nor that which cognizes the objective (*i.e.* external things), nor that which cognizes both, nor that which is a mass of consciousness *(prajñā-naghanaḥ).* It is neither cognition nor non-cognition. It is unseen, unrelated, incomprehensible, undefinable, inconceivable, and indescribable. It is the essence of the consciousness of the one Self. It is the cessation of all proliferation. It is all peace, all bliss, and non-dual *(advaita).* It is *Ātman,* and it has to be realized.
>
> *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad 1–5, 7*

In the first state, the *ātman* identifies itself with the physical body. The illusory self is aware of objects other than itself and experiences gross things through the gross body. The seven limbs denote various parts in the microcosm of the body and their counterparts in the macrocosm of the cosmos (head – heaven, eyes – sun, abdomen – space, *prāṇa* – air, mouth – fire, bladder – water, and

feet – earth). The nineteen mouths refer to the ten *indriyas* (five sensory, five motor), together with the *antaḥkaraṇa,* the internal instrument of the human mind, made up of the *manas* (sense-related mind function), *chitta* (memory-related mind function), *buddhi* (intellect), and *ahaṃkāra* (I-ness), together with the five *prāṇas,* one associated with each of the five subtle conditions *(tattvas, bhūtas)* of matter. These are the means whereby gross objects are experienced in the waking state.

In the second state, the self enjoys subtle things, seemingly internal phenomena, through the mind or the subtle body, and is not fettered by the limitations of the physical body. The impressions of waking experiences form the basis of the dream objects. The dream state is one of mental activity, yet the dreamer feels his consciousness to be engrossed in external objects. The mind in the dream state is called *taijasa* (luminous) because the objects have no reality, but are a projection of visible, illuminated things. Although there is a causal relationship between waking and dreaming experiences, they are considered to be of the same nature, for in both states the perceiver is aware only of his own mental states.

In the third state, dreamless sleep, the self is free from all desire and is wholly untroubled. The sleeper is absorbed in his own being;[2] he is said to enjoy bliss, but is unconscious of it. Shankara explains that the consciousness of someone in this state is "*eki-bhūta* (undifferentiated)", adding:

> This state is called a mass of consciousness *(prajñā-naghanaḥ)* because it is characterized by the absence of discrimination. It is a mass of mere consciousness, just as all things appear as a mass when they become indistinguishable in nocturnal darkness.
>
> *Shankara, On Māṇḍūkya Upanishad 5; cf. EUSG2 pp.182–83*

In this state of non-discrimination, there is no diversified experience, no specific knowledge. The waking and dream experiences merge in deep sleep. The 'unity' of this experience, however, is different from that attained through conscious awareness of the unconditioned *Brahman;* for when deep sleep is over, the person again takes multiplicity to be real, but once *Brahman* is known, multiplicity ceases forever to appear real. Similarly, the bliss of deep sleep is different from the absolute bliss of *Brahman.* It is, as Shankara says, a negative state of ease and joy stemming from the "absence of the misery that arises from the effort of the mind in vibrating as both the objects and their experiencer".[3]

Prājña (as opposed to *prajñā*) is used in the *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad* in a technical sense for the consciousness that experiences deep and dreamless sleep.[4] *Prājña* means 'relating to *prajñā*' or 'like *prajñā*'. It is like *prajñā* because in both dreamless sleep *(prājña)* and the higher mystic wisdom *(prajñā),* there is an absence of desire, as well as a complete unawareness of

the sufferings and duality of material life. *Prājña* is described as an 'undifferentiated mass of consciousness *(prajñā-naghanaḥ)*'. By this is meant that both dreaming and waking consciousness are differentiated or divided by the objects of imagination, thought, and perception; they are states of duality or multiplicity. But in deep sleep there is no such differentiation. Even so, the dreamless sleeper is in a state of utter ignorance. As Gauḍapāda observes in his commentary on the *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad.* "*Prājña* does not comprehend anything – neither himself nor others, neither truth nor falsehood."[5] It is also said that the consciousness experiences bliss while in deep sleep, but retains no memory of it upon awakening. As it says in the *Vedāntasāra,* "A man awakening from deep sleep may say, 'I slept blissfully; I did not know anything.'"[6]

Prājña (as dreamless sleep) is also said to be a reflection of the state of consciousness in the causal realm. Similarly, *taijasa* ('consisting of light', *i.e.* consciousness in the dream state) is a reflection of the subtle or astral realm, where everything is created out of the minds of the inhabitants. The two are part of a triad, with consciousness at the gross material level being known as *vishva* (universal) or *vaishvānara* (common to all men).

Some Vedantic commentators have identified deep sleep with the higher wisdom or gnosis, but this makes little sense. Gauḍapāda, one of the earliest commentators, clearly distinguishes *prājña* (as the consciousness in dreamless sleep) from the transcendent consciousness of *turīya* (fourth, beyond waking, dreaming, and deep sleep). Both are states where the perception of duality is absent; but one is an unconscious state while the other is superconscious:

> Dreamless sleep *(prājña)* knows nothing either of the self or of the non-self, nor of Truth, nor untruth; but *turīya* is ever existent and ever all-seeing.
>
> Unawareness of duality is common to both *prājña* and *turīya.* But *prājña* is associated with sleep as its cause, and sleep does not exist in *turīya.*... *Prājña* is the state of dreamless sleep. Those who have known the Truth see neither sleep nor dream in *turīya.* Dreaming is the incorrect perception and sleep the non-perception of Reality. When the erroneous knowledge in these two is destroyed, *turīya* is realized.
>
> *Gauḍapāda, Kārikā 1:12–14, on Māṇḍūkya Upanishad; cf. U2 pp.239–41*

Discussion of these four primary states of consciousness is taken up by other *Upanishads.* The *Brahma Upanishad* explains that the basis of the first three states of consciousness is the supreme Consciousness or *Brahman.* This is the *turīya* state:

> A person *(purusha)* has four centres: the navel, the heart, the throat, and the head. In these, *Brahman* shines out in four aspects *(pāda):*

> the states of wakefulness *(jāgrata),* dream *(svapna),* dreamless sleep *(sushupta),* and the transcendental state *(turīya).*...
>
> Know the wakeful state *(jāgrata)* to have its focus in the eyes, the dream state *(svapna)* in the throat, the state of dreamless sleep *(sushupta)* in the heart centre, and the transcendental state *(turīya)* in the crown of the head.
>
> *Brahma Upanishad 3, 22; cf. MUM pp.53, 63*

The *Shārīraka Upanishad* differentiates these states according to which of the basic aspects or faculties that comprise a human being are active. Behind these is the individual soul *(jīva)* itself:

> Wakefulness *(jāgrata),* dream *(svapna),* dreamless sleep *(sushupti),* and the fourth *(turīya)* are the four states. In *jāgrata,* all fourteen faculties are active, these being the five sense organs, the five instruments of action, and the four internal instruments *(antaḥkaraṇa). Svapna* depends on the four internal instruments. In *sushupti* only the mind *(chitta)* is active; in *turīya,* there is only the soul *(jīva).*
>
> *Shārīraka Upanishad; cf. TMU p.87*

The "five instruments of action *(karmendriyas)*" are speech, hands, feet, procreation, and elimination. The "four internal instruments *(antaḥkaraṇa)*" are *manas* (sense-related mind function), *chitta* (memory-related mind function), *buddhi* (intellect), and *ahaṃkāra* (I-ness).

Like the *Brahma Upanishad,* the *Kaivalya Upanishad* points out that everything perceived in the first three states is a manifestation of *Brahman,* realization of which is itself the fourth *(turīya)* state:

> That which is the supreme *Brahman,* the soul of all, the primal support of the universe, subtler than the subtle, and eternal – That thou art; thou art That.
>
> That which manifests all phenomena in the states of wakefulness *(jāgrata),* dream *(svapna),* and profound sleep *(sushupti)* – I am that *Brahman,* realizing which, you are liberated from all bonds.
>
> In the three states, whatever appears as the focus of enjoyment, or the enjoyer or the enjoyment itself, I am different from them. I am the Witness, the pure Consciousness, the eternal Good. From Me alone does everything proceed, in Me does everything exist, in Me is everything dissolved. I am that *Brahman,* without a second.
>
> *Kaivalya Upanishad 16–19; cf. MUM pp.78–79, PU p.930*

These four states are interpreted in the brief *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad*[7] and in Gauḍapāda's far longer commentary *(kārikā)* thereon, as relating to the letters

of the syllable *Auṃ. Auṃ* is the creative Sound of *Brahman* that creates, sustains, and pervades the three worlds – the causal, astral, and material worlds. In one of several symbolic interpretations of *Auṃ,* 'A' represents *vaishvānara;* 'U' represents *taijasa;* 'Ṃ' represents *prājña;* and *turīya* is represented by the prolonged and undifferentiated 'M-M-M' at the end of the word.

Vaishvānara (common to all men) or *vishva* (universal, universe) is the consciousness that experiences the gross material world of external things. *Taijasa* (consisting of light) is the consciousness that experiences the subtle, astral world of internal things. In some respects it is akin to the dream state, where everything is a projection of the mind, and time has no reality. *Prajñā* (wisdom, gnosis) is that which experiences the causal world of unmanifest archetypal mind patterns in seed or potential form; it is reflected in the *prājña* (wisdom-like) state of deep sleep. *Turīya* is the pure consciousness *(ātman)* of *Brahman* upon which the other three states are founded:

> There are four states of existence known as *jāgrata* (wakefulness), *svapna* (dream), *sushupti* (sleeping), and *turīya* (the fourth). The *purushas* (persons, experiencers) are four in number thus: *vishva, taijasa, prājña,* and *ātman.* The *vishva* enjoys the gross (body); the *taijasa* enjoys complete detachment; similarly the *prājña* delights in bliss; as for the One beyond that, He is the All-witness.
>
> *Yogachūḍāmaṇi Upanishad 72, YU p.291*

> *Vishva* experiences the external things and is all-pervading; but *taijasa* experiences the internal things; similarly, *prājña* is a mass of consciousness. It is but the same entity that is thought of in three ways.
>
> *Gauḍapāda, Kārikā 1:1, on Māṇḍūkya Upanishad, EUSG2 p.185*

The foundation of these three states is the pure consciousness – the self or soul *(ātman).* Without the *ātman,* there is no consciousness, no life. Experience, consciousness or realization of the *ātman* alone, which is identical with *Brahman,* is the fourth state. Whatever the level of consciousness, it is always the *ātman* that is the primary experiencer. When functioning through the gross physical senses, the soul, the self or the consciousness is called *vaishvānara;* when functioning through the subtle senses, either in dream or in the astral world, it is called *taijasa;* when functioning through the causal body, it is called *prajñā,* while in deep sleep it is known as *prājña.*

The *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad* describes dream *(svapna)* as the state in which the self identifies with the subtle faculties of the mind, breaking its connection with the body and the sensory impressions that comprise the material world. Taking as its materials the impressions *(sanskāras)* drawn from experiences in the waking state, it creates a dream body and a world of its own, behaving therein as the subject of action and experience, simultaneously

creating the characters and objects that populate the dream world, as well as the light that illuminates it. All are the creation of the dreamer:

> When he dreams, he takes with him something of this all-embracing (material) world. He himself breaks it up, and he himself rebuilds it. He dreams by his own brightness, by his own light. In that state, he is illumined by his own light.
>
> There are no (real) chariots there, nor animals to be yoked to them, nor roads there – he creates the chariots, animals, and roads. There are no pleasures, joys, or delights there – he creates the pleasures, joys, and delights. There are no lakes, lotus pools, or rivers there – he creates the lakes, lotus pools, and rivers. For he is the creator. . . .
>
> Going high and low in the dream state *(svapnānta),* like a god, he creates innumerable forms, enjoying himself in the company of women or even seeing frightening things.
>
> *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad 4:3.9–10, 13*

The same is true of the astral world, which is co-created out of the mental content of its inhabitants. Indeed, even the gross material world, seemingly so solid and real, is created in the same way, out of the mental impressions and past *karma* of its inhabitants. In fact, the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad* goes on to compare the embodied soul's experience of this world to that of a dreamer in a dream world. A dreamer thinks he has an independent free will, but actually he has unknowingly created his own world and his own experience.

According to some of the *Upanishads* and later Vedantic texts such as the *Vedāntasāra,*[8] the creation or the macrocosm is the result of a three-stage emanation of *Brahman. Brahman* is the unchanging Reality that undergoes no change or evolution. All change or evolution belongs to the sphere of *māyā* (illusion). *Brahman* associated with *māyā* is called *Īshvara* (Lord). *Īshvara* is described as omnipotent and omniscient, possessing the power to create. Hence the *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad* says:

> He is the Lord of all *(Sarveshvara, sarva + īshvara).* He is the knower of all *(sarvajña).* He is the inner Controller *(Antaryāmī).* He is the Source *(Yoni)* of all – their Source, their origin, and their dissolution.
>
> *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad 6*

Māyā at first remains undifferentiated *(avyākṛita);* this corresponds to the causal *(kāraṇa)* realm, where forms remain in seed or potential form. *Māyā* then becomes differentiated into subtle forms *(hiraṇyagarbha),* corresponding to the astral or subtle *(sūkshma)* realm, where the seeds are beginning to germinate. Finally, *māyā* is expressed in the gross universe *(virāṭ),* as

perceived in this world, where the germinating seed has become a full-grown tree – where the potential of the causal seed is fully expressed.

Īshvara expressed as *māyā* fully differentiated into gross or perceptible objects is called *vishva-rūpa* (all-inclusive form), *virāṭ-rūpa* (huge or expanded form) or *vaishvānara* (consisting of all men, common to all men; *i.e.* universal, omnipresent), which leads souls in the diverse directions found in the physical universe.[9] These three aspects of *Brahman* are also reflected in the human *(piṇḍī)* microcosm as the three states of human consciousness: waking, dreaming, and deep dreamless sleep.

Since the seed cause of all forms below lies in the unmanifested causal realm, Gauḍapāda comments:

> *Vishva* and *taijasa* are conditioned by cause and effect, but *prājña* is conditioned by cause alone. But these two (cause and effect) do not exist in *turīya.*
>
> *Gauḍapāda, Kārikā 1:11, on Māṇḍūkya Upanishad, PU p.699*

Swami Shivananda (1887–1963) compares the states of the soul when waking or dreaming. *Virāṭ* (huge) is *Brahman* manifested as the gross physical universe. Even in waking consciousness, due to the veil of illusion *(māyā)* and spiritual ignorance *(avidyā),* the physical universe is not recognized for what it actually is:

> Waking is a part of *virāṭ* consciousness,
> though, in waking, due to ignorance,
> the *virāṭ* is not directly realized.
> Waking is the connecting link
> between *vishva* and *virāṭ.*
> Man reflects over the world and the Reality
> when he is awake, and when his consciousness is active.
> In dream, the intellect and the will
> are incapacitated due to *avidyā* (spiritual ignorance)
> and deliberate contemplation becomes impossible.
>
> The *vishva* or the *jīva* in the waking state
> is possessed of intelligence and free will.
> The *taijasa* or the *jīva* in the dreaming state
> is destitute of such powers of free thinking.
> Dream experience is the result of
> impressions of waking experience;
> Whereas, waking experience is independent of
> dream experience and its effects.

There is a kind of order or system
in the waking experiences,
at least, more than in dream.
Every day the same persons and things
become the objects of waking experience.
There is a definite remembrance
of previous days' experiences
and of survival and continuity of personality in waking experience.
The consciousness of this continuity,
regularity and unity is absent in dream;
Dream is not well ordered,
while waking is comparatively systematic.

Swami Shivananda, First Lessons in Vedanta, FLVS p.130

A human being normally passes his life in the three states – either waking, dreaming, or deep sleep. The true mystic, on the other hand, has the ability to withdraw from these states at will, to experience their higher counterparts in the astral and causal realms, and to enter the fourth state. These states may be examined from a more general perspective to that encountered in the *Upanishads.*

1. *Jāgrat avasthā.* The waking state. In a human being, the headquarters, so to speak, of mind and consciousness are located at the eye centre in the forehead, between the two eyebrows. From here the mind and consciousness spread out into the world and down into the body. The senses, emotions, pleasures, passions and all else in outward physical life scatter the mind and draw it into the world, away from the focus of consciousness at the eye centre. This focus is also known as the *do-dal kamal* (two-petalled lotus) or *ājñā chakra* (command *chakra*). An individual, therefore, though he may be apparently wide awake, is acting from a reduced level of consciousness, the degree of reduction depending upon the individual.

For many people, the attention has dropped so much from the eye centre, and the mind has become so scattered into the body, that they have difficulty understanding that the mind and body are separate entities. For a human being, the sense of self is lodged in the mind; and with the mind permeating and controlling every pore and cell of the body, it is difficult for a person to realize that his real self is not the body. If an individual is able to differentiate mind from body, then he identifies with the mind, wherein is lodged the sense of individuality. Few human beings understand that behind the mind lies a universal, undifferentiated Consciousness or Intelligence of which all things are a part.

The *prārabdha karma* or destiny of an individual is stored in the mind, in the 'subtle organ of thought', the *antaḥkaraṇa.* From here the individual is

prompted to act and react, according to his preprogrammed destiny. He has no option but to follow the predestined course; and while doing so, his actions, thoughts and desires all leave grooves or impressions upon his mind. This is the new or *kriyamāṇa karma,* which becomes the seeds for the *prārabdha karma* of future births.

The waking condition of a human being, therefore, though apparently fully conscious, is highly coloured and directed by influences of which he is largely unconscious, but which come from within his own mind. As a consequence, the average person operates – at best – only partly from the eye centre, and mostly from the attention playing within the body below the eyes, extending out into the world and subject to a variety of ills and human imperfections.

Thus, the waking state is one in which a considerable degree of mental activity is subconscious, motivating and prompting a person to act while he remains quite unaware of what is really happening beneath the surface of his seemingly conscious mind. The attention functions from the throat or heart centres, and some people even come to believe that the focus of their being is not behind the eyes, but at the level of the heart.

The perfect man, however, or the perfect mystic, when functioning at the human level, operates entirely from the eye centre, and his life and destiny are under his full control.

Lucid moments, mental or intuitive revelations regarding science and the things of this world, the great creations of literature, art, and music – many of the highest aspects of human endeavour – have arisen when the concentrated attention has risen towards its true human focus in this thinking centre. It is then flavoured by the individual's karmic orientation of national culture, as well as mental and emotional inclinations.

The mystic therefore possesses the greatest capacity not only for enlightened cosmic understanding, but also for the highest of human comprehension, the formulation of ideas, and their practical manifestation in this world. He works from a point of real inner knowledge and experience of how the universe and human beings are constructed. Moreover, he appreciates the limited nature of human knowledge and acts accordingly.

In the waking state, a person can think and reason logically. Unlike the dream state, experiences are systematic and consistent, while perceptions are clearer and more stable. Intellect and intuition are the highest faculties operating at this level. They have a function to perform, but they cannot comprehend the mystic Reality. Perceptions are confined entirely to physical things, and the intellect struggles in vain to acquire the absolute knowledge of things that can only be had from the higher mystic state of *turīya avasthā.*

Mystically, the greatest importance of the waking state is that through it, a human being can move on to the superconscious state *(turīya)* by withdrawing the scattered attention from the material world and concentrating it at the eye centre. Mystics explain that it is not possible to attain *turīya* from the

dream state *(svapna avasthā),* or the state of deep sleep *(sushupti avasthā),* or from the waking state when the attention is scattered. The threshold of superconsciousness is at the eye centre, and that state can only be achieved when the attention is concentrated there in the waking state *(jāgrat avasthā).*

2. *Svapna avasthā.* The dream state. As a person falls asleep, the mind momentarily gathers concentration and the attention comes to the eye focus. However, it rapidly slips to a point of focus in the throat *chakra* or lower because it has developed the habit of going down to the lower centres. At the throat centre, it is semi-conscious, resulting in dreams.

Dreams are projections of the subconscious mind. When a person closes his eyes and recollects previous scenes and experiences, they exist only in thought or imagination. The same thing happens in dreams. In both instances, the individual is recalling previous impressions, and giving them a sense of reality. In the waking state, he is able to differentiate between the external and the imagined; but in dreams, his ability to discriminate between the two is in abeyance, and the imaginary seems real.

During sleep, the willpower or *ahaṃkāra* is temporarily suspended, and in the absence of the cohering force of the mind at its thinking centre in the forehead, the subconscious images float into a state of dream awareness. The subconscious mind projects itself as reality, and the dreamer experiences all the normal human emotions in response – fear, happiness, lust, desire or any other admixture of feelings, as experienced in daily life.

Dreams thus convey a muddled and incoherent replay of images from the subconscious mind, reflecting current or previous events and tensions in the present or past lives. Consequently, they may have an origin that cannot be determined. The mind contains countless impressions, having collected them from the time it first came into this creation. As it gains temporary release from the senses and enters the state of semi-consciousness, these impressions are projected as dreams. The source of these impressions may be current attachments and thoughts gathered in this life or unsatisfied desires and suppressed emotions that are lying dormant from past lives. Often, these pictures combine randomly to present inexplicable dream experiences.

The dream state contains very little coherent thought. The mind is hurriedly carried over a mass of confused mental impressions in a disorderly and seemingly disjointed and sometimes contradictory fashion. This is so because dream consciousness is characterized by the absence of the restraining and controlling power of the conscious will. Neither clear, stable nor reliable, the consciousness continually shifts its focus, moving from scene to scene in a most unsystematic and haphazard manner.

Dreams may sometimes seem like spiritual experiences, arising from earnest spiritual aspiration. This is because, in the dream state, the mind can to some extent become quiescent or reach a state of peace. This temporarily

frees the individual, allowing the mind and soul to rise up and enjoy spiritual experiences within, such as flying over hills or oceans or trying with difficulty to reach somewhere. When a person awakens from these dreams, he may experience a state of bliss or grace that lasts for some while. However, such experiences cannot be repeated at will and are unreliable since their content may be influenced by impressions from the subconscious mind.

Sometimes, too, when the mind becomes concentrated at the eye centre, snatches of *prārabdha karma* (destiny), already patterned into the *antaḥkaraṇa* (human mind centre), find their way into the dream state. Dream visions of the future are then experienced. But these flashes are usually blurred and seldom clear, though a clear flash may turn out to be correct. Moreover, these experiences are liable to interact with the hopes, desires and impressions of the subconscious mind, forming distorted images upon the inner mental screen. This is true of all psychic and clairvoyant visions and messages, whether received in dreams or otherwise. Such intuitions will be only more or less correct depending upon the experience and inner ascent of the individual.

Due to the unreliability of dream experiences, mystics generally advise their disciples not to imbue them with much significance. They point out that very few dreams are of any consequence and that it is unwise to analyse and draw inferences from them because they are not controllable and it is difficult to distinguish between what are genuine and what are imagined projections of the mind. Instead they lay emphasis on real experiences gained by entering the superconscious state *(turīya)* while wide awake in meditation.

However, masters do sometimes make use of dreams to inspire and encourage their disciples to do more meditation, especially in cases where a disciple has great affection and love for the master, but has not been able to make sufficient internal progress to see him within. As Maharaj Charan Singh explains:

> Your vision of the master in your dream is quite right. Such visions come to inspire and encourage us for more meditation. Whenever the attention does not rise sufficiently high in *bhajan* (meditation) but there is a sincere desire in our heart to go up and see the master, our soul sometimes succeeds in ascending during sleep to higher regions, and sees the master.
>
> *Maharaj Charan Singh, Divine Light, Letter 325, DL pp.315–16*

Masters also utilize dreams to bring out and cure what is latent within the disciple. In this way the disciple knows his own weaknesses, knows that they should be overcome, and also feels and enjoys the protection of the master. Furthermore, mystics sometimes permit their followers to undergo some of their *prārabdha karmas* in dreams. But this is all under the control of the master, not the disciple.

Dreaming appears to be a necessary aspect of sleep, conducive to mental well-being, and its absence causes mental disturbance. This has been demonstrated by awakening subjects during the dream state, identified by brainwave patterns that characterize dreaming. Dreams seem to be required to sort out the multitude of impressions, thoughts, emotions and other experiences that are received on a daily basis. Without this reprocessing and organization, a person becomes progressively disturbed, leading to increasingly emotional behaviour patterns, as the rational mind loses its grip.

A similar situation can arise due to the pressures of everyday life. Then, if no solution is found or help is not forthcoming, the mental energies can become so disturbed that the attention is caught up in them to the exclusion of outer events, and neuroses or energy disharmonies become the focus of a person's sense of identity. The result can be a nervous breakdown or even psychosis.

The attention of the true mystic, however, never falls below the thinking centre. Therefore, when he lies down to rest, the body sleeps while his consciousness ascends to higher realms. The dream function of resolving experiences and mental disturbances of the previous day is no longer necessary, for, in the waking state, the mystic holds his mind at a higher level than others. In consequence, the plethora of subconscious activity is largely eliminated and far less mental rest is required.

Even among those who practise meditation, the amount of sleep required is progressively reduced as the quality of meditation improves. True meditation engenders far more rest and relaxation than the unconsciousness of sleep could ever bring.

Additionally, regular meditation generally produces good dreams. Even dreams that under normal circumstances would be nightmares are mitigated by the influence of meditation. When in the state of sleep the soul drops downwards, then it may experience dreadful scenes. However, if a person has strongly developed the habit of *sumiran* (remembrance, repetition), it will come into the mind even in the dream state and counteract anything evil or frightening.

3. *Sushupti avasthā.* The state of deep dreamless sleep. While dreams or a form of consciousness are possible with attention at the throat centre, when the focus slips below this point to the heart or navel centres, deep sleep and complete unconsciousness of the surroundings ensue. This is *sushupti avasthā.*

In a human being, the eye centre is the seat of full waking consciousness. The further the attention falls from this centre the more unconscious it becomes. Consciousness goes on decreasing as the attention descends, until it ultimately sinks to the navel centre where the individual becomes completely unconscious. The soul, the current of conscious attention or *surat,* functions in this world through the mind, which is the instrument that connects the soul or innermost consciousness with the world. When the attention sinks to the

navel centre, this connection is temporarily severed and the sensory faculties of the mind *(indriyas)* receive no input. As Maharaj Sawan Singh explains:

> In the state of wakefulness, the connection with matter is direct, and in the state of dream the connection is also there, for the dream is simply the carrying over of impressions gathered in the wakeful state. In deep sleep, the connection is cut off, and this state is the state of dullness or ignorance. Compared with the wakeful state, the dream state is bad, and the state of deep sleep is worse.
>
> *Maharaj Sawan Singh, Spiritual Gems 150, SG p.235*

4. *Turīya avasthā.* Superconsciousness. According to the *Upanishads, turīya avasthā* refers to absorption in *Brahman* or *Ātman* (the supreme Self or Soul), and is reserved in yogic terminology for the highest *samādhi.* The *Maṇḍala-brāhmaṇa Upanishad,* however, maintains that there is further for the soul to advance, even beyond the fourth state:

> There are five *avasthās* (states): *jāgrata* (wakefulness), *svapna* (dream), *sushupti* (dreamless sleeping), the *turīya* (fourth), and *turīyātīta* (that beyond the fourth).
>
> *Maṇḍala-brāhmaṇa Upanishad 2:4, TMU p.190*

Generally speaking, since few yogis – especially in modern times – are aware of the vast extent of the mental and spiritual realms, *turīya* is understood as any level of superconsciousness above the eye centre.

In this state, the mind and soul, working through the astral or causal bodies in their respective regions, are completely withdrawn from the world of the senses and the physical *tattvas.* Finally, the soul leaves behind all traces of mind when it rises into purely spiritual domains above the causal realm of the universal mind. To attain this, the help of a perfect mystic adept or master is essential. On the physical level, he imparts the technique and answers practical questions on how to concentrate and withdraw the mind. On the inner planes, he is there to prevent the soul from getting lost, from becoming absorbed in its own mental projections, and from being misguided by other well-meaning but unenlightened souls inhabiting those regions.

Although the disciple's mind and soul leave the body as they do at the time of death, the body does not die. For as long as the play of *prārabdha karma* (*i.e.* destiny) continues, the life energies or *prāṇas* still function within the body, preventing death when the soul flies within. So for as long as life is destined to continue, the soul is ultimately drawn back to the body from the higher spheres. Waking consciousness then ensues.

Depending upon an individual's spiritual development, these mystical flights may last no longer than a few minutes and be purely a grace or a gift

from within, not under the practitioner's control; or they may be the hard-won fruit of years of meditation, which of itself attracts an abundant flow of divine grace. In this case, the soul goes within at will and returns only to continue the play of life in the physical world, according to its own *karma.* At death, when the energy of the *prārabdha karma* is spent, such a soul lays down the physical body with thankfulness and in full consciousness, more than ready to continue its life on the inner planes.

Focusing of the soul and mind at the eye centre is accompanied by bliss and ecstasy. As concentration deepens, the soul and mind then pass through various intermediate stages in the 'sky' of the body (the stages immediately above the eye centre), finally leaving the body altogether, to enter the subastral zone. As they pass through these stages, they become aware of light and sound, and on entering the astral realms they seem to be bathed in a light that is experienced both within and without.

As the soul and mind focus at the eye centre and begin the journey beyond, the feelings of bliss and joy are accompanied by a great increase in awareness and consciousness. The soul and mind expand beyond the constraints of the human ego or limited sense of self, and they become aware of the manner by which all creation below comes into being.

The first main staging post on the upward ascent is the thousand-petalled lotus *(sahasra-dal kamal),* the 'headquarters' or energy powerhouse from which all creation below is both created and administered. Any soul that reaches this far and merges with the lord or being who 'rules' this region may feel that it has reached the divine Source, whereas it has only reached the first station in the vast creative hierarchy. Indeed, the intensity of the experience of bliss, light and knowledge experienced even in the subastral realms has been sufficient to convince those who have had no higher guidance that they have already reached God, when in fact the journey has only just begun.

Everything in the astral world is fine and subtle; there is nothing gross about it. Compared to waking consciousness, the clearer, higher and more intense consciousness of this plane is as waking is to dreaming. When the soul reaches this stage, the brain and physical organs function as they do in sleep. Only the astral faculties are functioning consciously. The consciousness of this plane is superhuman, for it pierces the veil of physical phenomena and sees Reality in its astral form. Being subtle, it cannot be seen with the physical eyes or perceived with any of the five physical senses. Nor can it be known or comprehended by the human mind and intellect, for these are left in abeyance, together with the physical body.

Some yogis and others have realized after some time that there is a way through *sahasra-dal kamal* to a higher station beyond, that of the universal mind, also known as the causal plane or *trikuṭī.* But the general rule is that a soul can only go as high as the one who is guiding it. For those who follow the path of the Word, the sound of the bell is heard as the soul leaves the

body, deepening and resounding with increasing intensity as the soul is drawn upward to *sahasra-dal kamal* in the company of the master. Mystics say that from here the Sound deepens further into that resembling the continuous blowing of a conch, as the soul rises above *sahasra-dal kamal* into the causal plane or *trikuṭī.*

The *Upanishads* and yogic texts commonly compare the state of deep sleep to the fourth state, understood as union with *Brahman,* because in both states the ego is non-functioning and the sense of duality is also absent. But there is a vast difference between the two. In deep sleep, the condition is one of temporary unconsciousness, while the fourth state is one of superconsciousness, illumination, and deep understanding of the secrets of creation. In deep sleep, the mind and soul are in darkness, and although such sleep may relax and refresh the mind and body, it does not change the essential nature of the individual, nor does it bring about liberation from rebirth. The effect of superconsciousness, on the other hand, is lasting, and can make a wise man out of a fool.

These four states of consciousness are summarized by Maharaj Sawan Singh (1858–1948):

> So long as we do not succeed in entering into the eye centre, we remain utterly destitute of spiritual wealth and keep wandering in the labyrinth of lives. Time and again we come and go and find no satisfaction anywhere.
>
> On the earth plane, our soul has three states of being – wakefulness, dream, and slumber. The tenth gateway, however, leads to a state of superconsciousness known as *turīya.* This lies beyond the experience and comprehension of ordinary mortals. So long as we are awake, the soul occupies a position in the middle of the forehead, between the two eyes. Thus even a blind man, if you call him, will answer by exerting pressure at this centre.
>
> In the dream state, the soul lies at a point in the throat, while in slumber it falls to the navel. Just as the farther we are from light, the darker does it appear, so also dreams, which come when the soul has fallen from its refulgent position in the forehead, are vague and incomplete. The spirit cannot function normally and our experiences are chaotic. One may see a head but no feet; or the feet may be visible and the head invisible. In the state of deep sleep, the soul drops still lower to the navel, and coarse covers envelop it. . . .
>
> Those who practise *prāṇāyāma* (control of the subtle life energies through breath control) do so at this low navel centre. True peace can be found only in the regions above the eye centre. As you draw nearer this centre, you feel greater peace descending upon you, exactly as you begin to get a cooling sensation when you are climbing a mountain and

> begin to approach the summit. That is why the mind and soul must be fixed and made motionless at the eye centre. As soon as this is done, the current of consciousness in the entire physical body will withdraw and collect at that centre and the body will become senseless. This is real *prāṇāyāma,* and leads to the fourth state of existence – *turīya pad.* The lower *prāṇāyāma* is wasteful.
>
> *Maharaj Sawan Singh, Discourses on Sant Mat, DSM pp.17–18*

When operating in the astral and causal regions, the soul functions through astral and causal bodies, possessing astral and causal minds, analogous to the physical body and the thought processes familiar to human beings. But they are comprised of a far finer quality and vibration of material or energetic substance. From the threshold of the astral plane, the soul is illuminated by its own innate inner light and enlightened by the inner power of the vibrating Sound Current or divine Word. By the time the soul has laid down its causal garment on leaving the realm of the universal mind and has ascended into the purely spiritual regions, its light has become beyond the power of words to describe. Mystics have likened it to that of many suns, but this is only by way of example. At this stage, for the first time, the soul knows itself as pure soul. This is the higher self-realization, which is quite different from the psychological realization of facets of personality experienced by struggling human beings. Beyond the spiritual regions, say the mystics, lies the supreme Being, the undivided Source of all being, consciousness, and substance.

Swami Shiv Dayal Singh (1818–1878) locates *turīya pad* specifically in *sahas kanwal.* He observes that scholars and preachers have mistaken the first three states – the waking, the dream and the deep sleep states – for *turīya,* and that it is a true master *(satguru)* who can point out the way to the state of *turīya* and beyond:

> In the waking state *(jāgrat),* the world is a source of pain and fear –
> the dream state *(swapna)* too, is pain, pleasure, and suffering;
> In dreamless sleep *(sushupti),* there is some rest,
> but that, too, is not a permanent abode. . . .
> Graciously did he (the *satguru*) give the secret,
> and reveal the path of *turīya pad.*
> He exhorted us to cross *turīya* and proceed further,
> describing stages beyond that. . . .
>
> All these states *(pad),* said the saint,
> could not be attained without listening to the Word *(surat Shabd).*
> Again, the *satguru* narrates the secret,
> which I shall now reveal to you.

Turīya pad is *sahas kanwal*
go beyond and ascend to *trikuṭī;*
From there rise to *sunn* and open the tenth door *(das duārā),*
and then go up to *mahā sunn* (great void).

These people (preachers and scholars) do not attain even *turīya* –
they just talk of *turīya.*
They are aware of the first three states,
and consider these to be *turīya.*
Such preachers have done (themselves) great injustice,
and in this way have lost the fourth state *(avasthā chauthī).*

Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry
25:2.1–2, 10–12, 17–20, 25–27, SBP pp.213–14

When human beings experience inner illumination, their attention is focused either somewhere within the subtle energy realms of the body below the eye centre, or, at the most, through deeper concentration, above the eye centre within the 'sky' of the body where the mind is located. All these experiences can be infused with intense inner bliss, depending upon the inner devotion and love of the individual. They can also be accompanied by visions of light and sound, or even of events reflecting the past or the future, derived from the mind centre where destiny is stored in potential or seed form. From a human point of view, these experiences are wonderful and can change a person's life, especially if they come spontaneously and without prior understanding of the inner mysteries. Indeed, even among those who have studied such things all their life, but have never had such an experience, they can be life-changing, as theory becomes the long-sought-after reality.

Such inner illumination may come simply as a lucid moment or in a sudden and intense realization that life is a mystical phenomenon whose Source lies deep within, vibrating with intense power through every atom of the universe and every part of a person's inner being. These beautiful moments comprise the religious experiences of the devotees of the many world religions, where the inner spiritual truth at the base of all religions, behind all the outer rituals and ceremonies, is momentarily grasped. They also give power to the visions of the great poets, musicians and artists, whose inspiration is drawn from within themselves.

Even a belief in religion or God or a supreme Intelligence is not a pre-requisite for the soul within each individual to make its plea for recognition. Spiritual moments or experiences have visited people of many ways of thinking and probably all walks of life.

The point to be understood is that such experiences are only the very tip of the iceberg. They are an incentive to rise higher and to sharpen the urge to seek the greater Reality. Practitioners of the mystic path aim to so consolidate

their spiritual progress that such mystic transport is theirs at will, and the experiences are repeatable.

There are certain allied experiences that in recent years have attracted the attention of doctors and scientists. Many patients have reported that they have left their physical bodies during times when they nearly died due to illness, surgery, accident, childbirth, and so on. Even those who have set out to show that such experiences are derived from imagination, hallucination and the memory of televised hospital scenes and dramas, have found it necessary to reconsider and ultimately to reverse their understanding when faced with firsthand accounts from patients or when they themselves have had such an experience.

These experiences have been classified as near-death or out-of-the-body experiences. Broadly speaking, they appear to fall into three main categories. Firstly, there is a dissociation of the mind and its subtle component of the physical senses (the *indriyas*) from the physical body. The attention, however, remains in the physical world and is able to perceive events as if through the physical senses. Characteristically, individuals leave the confines of the physical body and float up to the ceiling where they observe the attempts to bring them back to life.

Such experiences have been reported in all ages and cultures and have usually been described as 'astral projection'. However, it is probably more correct to describe them as subtle physical or 'etheric' experiences, within the region where ghosts and nature spirits reside. In mystic parlance, this is still a part of the physical realm, and is not astral at all. Moreover, the individual does not so much leave the body as experience an expansion of awareness which gives the impression of disassociation from the body.

The second kind of experience related by those who have been through near-death experiences is that of passing through a 'tunnel'. This is the soul's experience of passing through the veil that separates the individual from the lower astral realms. It is also known as the inner 'sky' of the body or the subtle physical akashic gateway.

Finally, a few souls have passed through this tunnel into a bright, self-luminous world, where they have even met other souls and conversed with them. Often, it is with reluctance that they are drawn back to their physical body by their destiny *karma,* which still needs to be undergone, returning to 'consciousness' with the nurses and doctors standing around them. Almost without exception, this experience possesses clarity, and often great beauty, and is taken by the individual as an experience whose higher reality is self-evident, unquestionable and life-changing – much as a person knows that a dream was only a dream – but only when he awakens.

The mind can project itself in many ways, and there are a variety of other states of consciousness known to human beings that are modifications of these four states. Among these are mesmerism and hypnosis. In mesmerism,

the mental energy normally focused in the brain is dispersed to lower areas of the body by passes of the practitioner's hands, sometimes in conjunction with magnets, though whether the magnets affect the consciousness is uncertain. The process is not physical but involves interaction between the psychic energy of the practitioner and subject.

The hypnotist, on the other hand, engages the mental attention of the subject. Through strong suggestion, often accompanied by focused concentration on a particular object, he takes over the thinking mind of the subject. The senses still function, but the hypnotist has partial control of the subject's mental awareness and cognition.

In both cases, the acquiescence of the subject is required, and his willpower *(ahaṃkāra)* is in abeyance, together with his control over and appreciation of sensory function. It is in this way that the various bizarre phenomena of hypnotism become possible. The subconscious mind can be impressed to react in particular ways to certain stimuli upon return to the waking condition, or the mind can be made to override sensory input so that heat or cold, for example, do not become uncomfortable. Conversely, the subtle motor and sensory mechanisms of the *indriyas* can be activated by suggestion or auto-suggestion to produce the apparent sensation of heat or cold in the absence of any such physical stimulus, or to induce the subject to act in a particular manner.

The co-operation of the subject is, however, required, and impressionable people generally make the best subjects. In fact, mesmerism and hypnotism essentially manipulate the willpower and mental integrity of the subject. As such, those who seek mystical experience and are meditating accordingly are advised against experimenting with mesmerism, hypnosis, and so on, either as practitioners or subjects. Full presence of mind is required for successful meditation, as well as personal control and integrity of mental processes.

It is because mystical experience is essentially experience of an elevated or expanded consciousness that mystics have discussed the nature of consciousness. ʿInāyat Khān (1882–1927) describes the various states of consciousness, especially that of the waking state:

> The wakeful state of every individual is different and peculiar to himself, just as the sleep of every individual is different and peculiar to himself. One person will be what is called fast asleep, that is to say in deep sleep; another will be half asleep. This shows that the extent of sleep is different in every experience, and no one can classify this extent of sleep.
>
> The wakeful state also differs in every individual. Many people may be sitting in a room, but one is more conscious of what is going on in that room than another. Five people may be hearing music, and each will apply his consciousness differently to what he hears. Each will

enjoy and receive the effect of the music differently, and this shows that the body and the mind are vehicles or instruments through which the soul experiences life, the soul being that part of our being which is capable of being conscious by means of mind and body. Therefore, to the mystic, it is that part of one's being which witnesses life through vehicles such as the mind and body which is the real being, and he calls it himself or his soul.

In Sufi terms it is called *rūḥ,* and in the Sanskrit or Vedantic terminology it is called *ātman,* the real being of man. By experience of life, with the help of the mind and body, this *ātman* or soul becomes deluded, and the delusion is that it loses consciousness of its pure self, as it is natural that when a person is poorly dressed he thinks he is poor; he never thinks it is only his dress that is poor. When he is moving in a beautiful palace, he is a big man. He does not think it is the palace which is big, rather than himself.

This shows it is not what a man is, but what he believes he is, that he is related to. The soul is never ill, but when it is conscious of the illness of the body the man says, "I am ill" – and the reason is that he cannot point out to his own consciousness his own true being; as the eyes cannot see themselves though they are able to see the whole world, so the soul cannot see itself except when it is conscious of all that is reflected in it. The soul is neither poor nor rich; it is neither sorrowful nor joyous. These are reflections which fall upon it. And as it cannot realize itself, it considers itself to be that which is reflected in it, and therefore man lives his life in his consciousness. He is at every moment that which he is conscious of: in cheerful surroundings he is pleased; in miserable surroundings he is sad. No sorrow or joy can make an everlasting impression on the soul, for the nature of the soul is like a mirror, and while all that stands before the mirror is reflected in it, nothing can stay there. When the person who stood before the mirror is removed, then the mirror is as clear as ever; and so it is with the soul.

For the sake of convenience, the mystics have divided the experiences of the consciousness into five different phases. The particular phase the consciousness is most familiar with is the wakeful state, in which the soul experiences through mind and body. This state in Sufi terms is called *nasūt,* and in Vedantic terms it is called *jāgrat.* As the soul only considers what it experiences through the senses with the help of the mind, the reason that many are not yet ready to believe in the soul or in the hereafter or in God is that the soul is acquainted with one sphere only, and that is the sphere which it experiences with the help of the body and mind.

ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK4 pp.196–98

According to ʻInāyat Khān's analysis, the "five different phases" of consciousness are: waking; deep thought, imagination, and dream; deep sleep; transcendental consciousness; and realization of the Divine. He includes conscious thought along with dream, and differentiates between elevated states of consciousness and final realization.[10]

Many other Indian mystics have spoken of the various states of consciousness. Their focus is characteristically that of an exhortation to awaken spiritually and to transcend the normal states of human consciousness. Sahajobāī recommends rising above the three lower states and entering the fourth:

> Waking *(jāgrat),* deep slumber *(sushupti)*
> and dream *(swapn)* are the three states *(avasthā)*
> in which your life is being consumed.
> Look beyond these for the peace of the soul in *turīya;*
> O Sahjo, the Essence is infinite:
> there the mind and senses cannot reach.
> *Sahajobāī, Bānī, Nitya anitya sānshya mat kā ang 2–3, SBB pp.37–38*

And:

> Contemplate on Truth:
> go from within limits to beyond limits.
> Leave behind the three *avasthās*
> and become immersed in *turīya.*
> *Sahajobāī, Bānī, Solah tithi nirnay 7, SBB p.43*

In the *Ādi Granth,* the *gurus* imply that the fourth state *(turīya)* lies beyond the three *guṇas* or attributes of change (creation, preservation, destruction; activity, harmony, inertia; future, present, past; *etc.*) which characterize the worlds of the mind. Not until the soul rises above the level of the mind is it safe from transmigration, a state that can only be attained with the help of a true master:

> One who loves the three qualities *(trai guṇ)*
> is subject to birth and death.
> The four *Vedas* speak only of the visible forms.
> They describe and explain the three states *(awasthā)* of mind,
> but the fourth state *(turī awasthā),* union with the Lord,
> is known only through the true *guru (satgur).*
> *Guru Nānak, Ādi Granth 154, AGK*

> The quality of energy and activity *(raj guṇ),*
> the quality of darkness and inertia *(tam guṇ),*

and the quality of purity and light *(sat guṇ),*
are all called the creations of *māyā,* Your illusion.
That man who realizes the fourth state *(chauthe pad)* –
he alone obtains the supreme state *(param pad).*
Kabīr, Ādi Granth 1123, AGK

Only in this fourth state is *sahaj* (equipoise, peace, tranquillity) obtained:

In the three qualities *(triḥ guṇā), sahaj* is not obtained:
the three qualities *(trai guṇ)* lead to delusion and doubt.
What is the point of reading, studying and debating,
if one loses one's Roots (Source)?
In the fourth state *(chauthe pad),* there is *sahaj.*
Guru Amardās, Ādi Granth 68, AGK

The world is in the grip of the three qualities:
only a few attain the fourth state *(turīā)* of absorption.
O Nānak, the saints are pure and immaculate:
the Lord abides within their minds.
Guru Arjun, Ādi Granth 297, AGK

1. *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad* 5.
2. *Cf. Chhāndogya Upanishad* 6:8.1.
3. Shankara, on *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad* 5; *cf. EUSG2* p.183.
4. *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad* 5.
5. Gauḍapāda, *Kārikā* 1:12, on *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad, EUSG2* p.208.
6. *Vedāntasāra* 46.
7. *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad* 8–12.
8. Sadānanda, *Vedāntasāra* 91, 111–19; Shankara, *Vivekachūḍāmaṇi* 20.
9. For *avyākṛita,* see *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad* 1:4.7; for *hiraṇyagarbha,* see *Shvetāshvatara Upanishad* 3:3, 4:12, *Nṛisiṃha-uttara-tāpinīya Upanishad* 1; for *vaishvānara,* see *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad* 3, *Prashna Upanishad* 1:7, *Bhagavad Gītā* 15:14, *Vedāntasāra* 91; for *virāṭ-rūpa,* see *Vedāntasāra* 91; for *vishva-rūpa,* see *Prashna Upanishad* 1:7, *Bhagavad Gītā* 11:16, *Rām Charit Mānas* 4:21.2, 6:14.
10. ʿInāyat Khān, *Sufi Message, SMIK8* pp.98–103.

avikalpa jñāna, **avikalpaka jñāna** (S) *Lit.* awareness *(jñāna)* without *(a)* difference *(vikalpa);* gnosis or awareness without thought, analysis, or conceptualizing; also, unwavering, unperturbed, without hesitation; undifferentiated, non-conceptual, directly experiential, mystical gnosis or knowledge of Reality; pure awareness in the absence of concepts, judgments, and

discriminative thinking; synonymous with *nirvikalpa* and *nirvikalpaka jñāna.* See **nirvikalpa jñāna**.

avikkhepa (Pa), **avikshepa** (S) *Lit.* absence *(a)* of shaking *(vikkhepa);* non-distraction, undistractedness, undivided attention; freedom from distraction; the nature of a controlled and undistractible mind; in Buddhism, one of the mental factors *(cetasika)* that comprise a wholesome *(kusala)* consciousness, according to the *Abhidhamma* (systematic analysis of the *suttas*); one of the essential 'ingredients' of one-pointed peaceful concentration; more or less synonymous with concentration *(samādhi),* mental one-pointedness *(citta-ekaggatā),* and tranquillity *(samatha).*

According to the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* and Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga,* non-distraction *(avikkhepa)* and a one-pointed mind *(ekagga-citta)* are attained through practising mindfulness of breathing, through meditative awareness of in-breaths and out-breaths. As a result of this practice, "mindfulness *(sati)* is established".[1] Following the *Paṭisambhidāmagga,* Buddhaghosa also says that non-distraction is the primary characteristic of *samādhi* (meditative concentration) and the essential aspect of *sammā-samādhi* (right concentration), which is the final aspect of the noble eightfold path.[2]

Avikkhepa is the converse of *uddhacca-kukkucca* (restlessness and worry), which is one of the five hindrances *(nīvaraṇa)* to concentration. Buddhadasa Bhikkhu explains:

> *Uddhacca* has the meaning of bursting out, spreading, scattering. It is the spreading out or scattering of thoughts as a result of too much liking or interest. *Kukkucca* is uneasiness and worry through not knowing how to do something, and where; or, knowing this, being dissatisfied, not pleased. This happens when one is agitated by outward things because of one's temperament or through excessive and prolonged effort, which makes everything go wrong. . . .
>
> *Avikkhepa* means 'absence of shaking', absence of any swaying this way and that. Applied to the mind, it indicates that the mind is steady and firm by itself and able to withstand disturbances without wavering. The mind is then in its 'original' state; hence this factor is counted as another aspect of the mind's unique excellence. This virtue can be developed only by earnest practice because it is in the nature of the mind to change and waver.
>
> *Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, Ānāpānasati, AMBB pp.195–96*

1. *Paṭisambhidāmagga* 3:193, 291*ff., PTSP1* pp.176–77, 186*ff., PDPM* pp.177, 187*ff.;* Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 8:163, 228, *PTSV* pp.271, 288, *PPVM* pp.264, 280–81.

2. *Paṭisambhidāmagga* 11:342*ff., PTSP1* p.69*ff., PDPM* p.69*ff.;* Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 3:4–5, 16:83, 22:45, *PTSV* p.85, 510, 681–82, *PPVM* pp.82, 525–26, 711–12.

aw adná (A), **aw adnā** (P) *Lit.* or *(aw)* nearer *(adná);* an expression drawn from an account in the *Qur'ān* in which Muḥammad is said to have come within "two bows' length *(qāba qawsayn)* or nearer *(aw adná)*"[1] to the presence of God. The expressions have been used by some Sufis for two of the highest stations of the soul in its ascent to God.

See also: **jamʿ al-jamʿ**, **qāba qawsayn**.

1. *Qur'ān* 53:9.

awakening Becoming alert; passing from the sleep state to everyday consciousness; mystically, awakening from the dream and slumber of materiality to consciousness of the spiritual reality; passing from normal waking consciousness to superconsciousness; a metaphor common to many spiritual traditions.

The Greek mystic Heraclitus (*c.*535–475 BCE) is comparing the spiritually awakened to the majority of people ("sleepers"), when he observes:

> To the awakened,
> there is a single Cosmos (Reality), common to all;
> Sleepers each have a private cosmos of their own.
> *Heraclitus, Fragment 15 (89); cf. PAC2 p.6*

Or as the apostle John says to one of the characters in the *Acts of John:*

> Awake, and open your soul:
> cast off from yourself this heavy sleep.
> *Acts of John 21; cf. ANT p.230*

And likewise, Angelus Silesius:

> You must awake, through God, from your deep sleep;
> If you don't rouse yourself, you'll stay fixed in your dream.
> *Angelus Silesius, Cherubinic Wanderer 5:350, CW p.125*

And since it is easy to say, but difficult to achieve, Mechthild of Magdeburg prays:

> Lord Jesus Christ! I seek your help:
> awaken my soul from the sleep of indolence.
> *Mechthild of Magdeburg, Flowing Light 7:26; cf. RMM p.226*

Walter Hilton succinctly analyses his condition. It is all a question of the direction of the attention:

> The more deeply I am at rest from outward things, the more awake I am to the knowledge of God and of inward things. I cannot be awake to Jesus unless I am asleep to the world. So while the grace of God closes the bodily eyes, the soul is asleep to the vanities of the world: the eyes of the spirit are opened, and it wakes to the sight of God's majesty hidden within the clouds of His precious humanity.
> *Walter Hilton, Ladder of Perfection 2:40, LPH pp.228–29*

In the end, mystics have agreed that it is the grace of God that awakens a soul. John of the Cross says that He has many ways by which to do so, "one of the loftiest" and most profound of which is the action of the divine Word or Son of God:

> There are many ways in which God awakens in the soul: so many that, if we had to enumerate them, we should never end. But this awakening of the Son of God … is, as I believe, one of the loftiest and one which brings the most good to the soul. For this awakening is a movement of the Word in the depth of the soul, of such greatness and dominion and glory, and of such intimate sweetness, that it seems to the soul that all the balms and perfumed spices and flowers in the world are mingled and shaken and revolved together to give that sweetness; and that all the kingdoms and dominions of the world, and all the powers and virtues of heaven, are moved.
> *John of the Cross, Living Flame of Love 4:4; cf. CWJC3 p.94*

Though it is God that awakens the soul, in many instances He does so through the medium of His Word, manifested outwardly as a saviour. Hence, the third-century Iranian mystic, Mānī, quotes Zarathushtra:

> The holy Zarathushtra, the saviour, when talking with his soul, (said): "Deep is the drunken stupor in which you sleep. Awake, and look at me! From the world of peace from which I have been sent, grace be upon you!"
> *Manichaean Text, MM3 p.872ff., RMP ay; cf. GSR p.47, ML p.48*

And a Manichaean devotee addresses his saviour:

O Son of the gods, who gives life to many;
O great caller who awakes my soul from sleep;
O bright lamp that illuminates my heart and eye.
Manichaean Hymns, MM3 p.868ff., RMP cg; cf. GSR p.67

And likewise:

The light is come, and near is the dawn!
Arise brethren, give praise! …
Abandon sleep, awake, behold the light
that has drawn near.…
He has come to the world –
all the sons of darkness hide.…
We shall forget the dark night.
Manichaean Hymns; cf. MMP pp.50–51

Similarly, among the Mandaean texts, dating from a similar era, it is again the divine Word ("Fragrance") that awakens the dead or sleeping soul:

Fragrance came from its own place,
Truth came from its home.
Fragrance came from its own place,
it came and settled in the house.
It calls out and makes the dead alive,
it arouses those who are dying and lying prone.
It awakens souls who are fit for
and worthy of the place of light.
Mandaean Prayer Book 135; cf. CPM p.123

Going yet further back in time, Socratēs says in Plato's *Republic* that he who believes in beautiful things, but not the Absolute Beauty (*i.e.* "the Good", God) is dreaming, while he who can behold It is "very much awake".

Socratēs: And he who, having a sense of beautiful things has no sense of Absolute Beauty, or who, if another lead him to a knowledge of that Beauty is unable to follow – of such a one I ask, "Is he awake or in a dream only?" Reflect: is not the dreamer, sleeping or waking, one who likens dissimilar things, who puts the copy in the place of the real object?
Glaucōn: I should certainly say that such a one was dreaming.
Socratēs: But take the case of the other, who recognizes the existence of Absolute Beauty and is able to distinguish the idea from the

> objects which participate in the idea, neither putting the objects in the place of the idea nor the idea in the place of the objects – is he a dreamer, or is he awake?
>
> GLAUCŌN: He is very much awake.
>
> *Plato, Republic 5:476c–d; cf. DP2 p.336*

Following the same theme, Plotinus describes in detail the awakening of a philosopher to "the Good" or to "Beauty", who can never again look in the same way at "material forms". The soul, he says, is "at peace, rapt in the vision and possession of so lofty a loveliness, growing to Its likeness".[1] Heraclitus likens the waking consciousness of this world to "death". The dreams of a sleeping man are acknowledged as unreal, but the waking state is no better:

> Whatever we see when awake is death,
> when asleep, dreams.
>
> *Heraclitus, Fragment 16 (21), HPW p.20*

See also: **resurrection** (8.4), **sleep** (6.2).

1. Plotinus, *Enneads* 1:6.7; *cf. PEC* p.24.

awareness The state of being cognizant or aware of something; spiritually, the state of being conscious of one's own consciousness, of being aware of one's own being, which is where God is to be found; in a focused and spiritually attentive person, the state of being aware of everything within one's field of perception; in a state of superconsciousness, being aware of much that lies outside the field of normal sensory perception.

For most human beings, a confused tangle of thoughts and emotions, both conscious and subconscious, occupy the attention to such a degree that actual awareness is greatly restricted, even of things within the field of normal sensory perception. Even the simplest things are missed when the attention is occupied with other concerns.

Therefore, the anonymous author of the *Cloud of Unknowing* and the *Book of Privy Counselling* maintains that the starting point in spiritual life is the refocusing of the attention upon the naked awareness of one's own being:

> If any thought concerning any particular thing should enter your mind, except that of that simple awareness of your naked being (which is your God and your goal), then it will knock you off course, and draw you back to speculation and guesswork, scattering and separating you from both His being and yours. Then you will no longer be totally

> present either with yourself or with your God. Therefore, with His grace and the wisdom that comes from perseverance in this work, remain recollected and undistracted, as much as you can.
>
> With your attention centred on the blind awareness of your naked being, which as I have said is one with God, you will go about your daily rounds, eating and drinking, sleeping and waking, coming and going, speaking and listening, lying down and rising up, standing and kneeling, running and riding, working and resting. In the midst of it all, you will be offering to God continually each day the most precious gift you can make. This work will be at the heart of everything you do, whether active or contemplative. . . .
>
> So keep a tight rein on your imagination, and offer up to God the naked, blind awareness of your own being. But I say again: be sure that it is naked and not clothed in any particular attribute of your being. For if you do clothe it in this way – for instance, with ideas concerning the self-worthiness of your being, or with some remarkable characteristic that relates to the nature of human beings or other creatures – then you will at once have fed your imagination, and given it the opportunity and strength to drag you into trivialities of every kind. And I warn you, before you know it, your attention will be scattered, and you will find yourself distracted and bewildered. Please be wary of this trap, I pray you.
>
> *Book of Privy Counselling 5–6; cf. CU (7, 9) pp.150–51, 155–56, CUCW pp.174, 179, LPD pp.37–38, 44*

In short, as the first step, the writer recommends:

> Look up joyfully and say to your Lord, aloud or in your heart, "What I am, Lord, I offer to you, for You are what I am." Rest in this naked, simple, elemental awareness that you are as you are.
>
> *Book of Privy Counselling 1; cf. CU (1) p.139, CUCW p.162, LPD p.22*

This discovery of the essential self, the naked awareness of one's own being, he describes as the "first of your fruits"[1] in the practice of contemplation. Having, therefore, achieved some modicum of success in remaining focused upon one's own sense of being, this unknown monk goes on to advise the forgetting one's own being in the presence of the Divine:

> Now I want you to understand that although in the beginning I told you to forget everything but the blind awareness of your own naked being, my intention all along has been to lead you eventually to the point where you would forget even this, in your awareness of the being

> of God. That is why I showed you at the outset, that God is your being. At that time I felt it was premature to expect you to be raised suddenly to an elevated spiritual awareness of God's being. So I let you climb towards it gradually, teaching you first to get down to the naked, blind awareness of your own being until by spiritual perseverance you acquired an ease in this interior work. I knew it would prepare you to experience the sublime knowledge of God's being. For ultimately, that must be your single abiding desire: the longing to experience only God.
>
> It is true that to begin with, I told you to cover and clothe the awareness of God in the awareness of your self, but only because you were still spiritually raw and inexperienced.
>
> With perseverance, I expected you to grow increasingly in spiritual purity, until you were ready to strip and utterly divest yourself of every trace of self-awareness, even the elemental awareness of your own being, so that you might be newly clothed in the grace of the essential experience of God as He is in Himself.
>
> *Book of Privy Counselling 8; cf. CU (12) pp.159–60, CUCW p.183, LPD pp.50–51*

He then explains that forgetfulness of self does not mean ceasing to exist:

> So, whenever in this work you become aware that it is your self of which you are conscious, and not God, be filled with sincere sorrow and long with all your heart to be entirely absorbed in God alone. Always desire to be rid of this lamentable and corrupted awareness of your blind being; long to escape from self as from a prison. . . .
>
> Yet do not misunderstand me. I did not say that you must desire to un-be, for that is lunacy and an insult to God. I said that you must desire to lose the conscious knowledge of self, which is essential if God's love is to be experienced as fully as one can here below.
>
> You must realize and experience for yourself that unless you lose your self you will never reach your goal. For wherever you are, in whatever you do, or however you try, that elemental awareness of your own blind being will remain between you and your God. Except, of course, for those occasional times when God intervenes, and fills you with a transient experience of Himself and His abundant love.
>
> *Book of Privy Counselling 8; cf. CU (13) pp.160–61, CUCW p.184, LPD pp.51–52*

Awareness of one's own naked being leading to awareness of God when the ego is eliminated is a recurrent theme of this unknown author:

> If you will take the trouble to try it, you will find that when all other creatures and their activities – indeed, even your own – have been

> forgotten, there still remains between you and God a naked feeling and awareness of your own being. And this feeling and awareness must also be destroyed before you can experience contemplation in its perfection.
>
> Now you will ask me how you can eliminate this naked feeling and awareness of your own being. For you are probably thinking that, if it were eliminated, all other difficulties would be eliminated too; and you would be right. But to this, my answer is that without God's very special grace, freely given, and your own complete and willing readiness to receive it, you can never hope to eliminate this naked feeling and awareness of your own being.
>
> *Cloud of Unknowing 43–44; cf. CU p.92, CUEU pp.179–80, CUCW p.111*

In short:

> Spiritual work demands that you continually strive towards the naked awareness of your own self, ceaselessly offering your own being – the most precious offering you can make – to God.
>
> *Book of Privy Counselling 12; cf. CU (23) p.175, CUCW p.198, LPD (13) p.73*

For, he repeats, the essential nature of the soul, the deep centre of one's own being, is God:

> Let that humble and spiritual darkness be your whole mind, and be like a mirror to you. For I would say to you, let your thought of self be as naked and simple as your thought of God, so that you may be one with Him in spirit – without any fragmentation or scattering of your mind. For He is your being, and what you are you are in Him, not merely because of this fact, but because He is both the cause and the deep centre of your being. Therefore in your contemplative practice, think of God and of your self in the same way, namely that He is as He is, and that you are as you are. In this way, your thinking will not be fragmented or scattered, but unified in Him who is all. Yet never forget this distinction: that He is your being and not you His. For though it is true that all things have their being in Him as their source and ground of being, and that He exists in all things as their cause and being, yet He alone is His own cause and His own being. Just as nothing can exist without Him, so He too cannot exist without Himself. He is His own being and the being of everything else. He alone is distinct from all else, in that He is the being of Himself and everything. So too is He one in all things, and all things are one in Him, for all have their being in Him who is the being of all.
>
> *Book of Privy Counselling 1; cf. CU pp.138–39, CUCW pp.161–62*

In another passage, he again emphasizes the spiritual significance of developing awareness of the divine presence that lies at the heart of one's own being:

> It is important that you seriously concentrate on the effort to abide continually in the deep centre of your spirit, offering to God that naked, blind awareness of your own being (which I called your first fruits). . . .
>
> Be as 'blind' in your loving contemplation of God's being as you are in the naked awareness of your own. Let your faculties rest from analytical enquiry into the particular attributes of His being or yours. Put speculation firmly aside, and worship God with all you have. All that you are, just as you are, offered to all that He is, just as He is. For only He, and He completely, in His own glorious being – and yours too.
>
> *Book of Privy Counselling 4; cf. CU (5) pp.146–47, CUCW pp.169–70*

See also: **attention**, **attentiveness**.

1. *Book of Privy Counselling* 3–4, *CU* pp.144–46, *CUCW* pp.167–69, *LPD* pp.28–32.

ayin, **ayn** (He) *Lit.* nothing, naught, emptiness; a Hasidic term for the state of nothing, the state of total self-transcendence and union with the Divine.

According to legend, the first Hasidic master, the Baʿal Shem Tov, used a wordplay to teach the importance of transcending the material self through devotion to God. He said that the process of *yiḥud* (union), accomplished through *devekut* (cleaving, intense devotion), transforms the *ani* (I, ego) into *ayin* (nothing). In Hebrew, both *ayin* (nothingness) and *ani* (self) are spelled with the same letters but in a different order. Some kabbalists and *ḥasidim* distinguish *ayin,* the state of becoming nothing, and *aḥdut,* which is the state of union with God and becoming the All – the infinite ocean of the Divine.

In Hasidism, the divine Source or Reality Itself is described as *ayin* (nothing, nonbeing, no-substance), while the physical universe is called *yesh* (something, being, substance). The mystic embodies both simultaneously. When he enters into a state of self-transcendence and higher consciousness, his attention flows from the state of *yesh* (in which consciousness is linked to his body) to that of *ayin* (the pure spirituality in which he experiences union with God and freedom from the pull of the physical).

See also: **aḥdut**, **Ayin** (2.1), **Yesh** (3.1), **yiḥud**.

āzād (P) *Lit.* free, liberated, released; thus, one who is free, a liberated one; in Sufi terminology, spiritually liberated; hence also, *āzādī* and *āzādagī* (liberation,

freedom). The spiritual freedom aspired to is release from bondage to the lower human nature *(nafs),* its associated egotism, and from anything other than God. Ḥāfiẓ puts it simply when he says that he will be happy to be free at last from the creation:

> I shall raise my head like a cypress
> into freedom *(āzādagī)* from the creation,
> and with luck shake my skirts free of the world.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.173, DIH p.298; cf. DHWC (387:5) p.664, in SSE5 p.76*

> Openly I say it and happy in heart:
> Liberated *(āzād)* am I from both the worlds,
> but to love – a slave *(bandah).*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.191, DIH p.318; cf. DHWC (416:1) p.703*

See also: **ḥurrīyah**.

báirì fēishēng, **báizhòu fēishēng** (C) *Lit.* to ascend or fly to heaven *(fēishēng)* in broad daylight *(báirì, báizhòu);* spiritual enlightenment in the midst of normal life.

Although 'ascending' and 'flying' refer metaphorically to inner spiritual ascent, some Daoist texts relate that, on attaining spiritual immortality, the adept, flying off on a crane *(hè),* rises into the sky and disappears, often accompanied by spirits or deities. Some hagiographies claim that these events take place in the presence of witnesses.

The metaphorical meaning of *báirì* or *báizhòu fēishēng* is to attain the *Dào* and thus ascend through higher realms while still living. The Daoist master Liú Yīmíng (1734–1821) explains that when the spiritual work is complete, the spirit is free to 'fly heavenward' to union with the *Dào:*

> Then the work is done and the task accomplished,[1] and you will ride on a phoenix flying towards the celestial north palace (*i.e.* heavenward), ascend in broad daylight *(báirì fēishēng),* and become a celestial immortal *(tiānxiān)* who is pure *(chún) yáng* (*i.e.* positive, spiritual) and never dies. Won't that be wonderful?
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17*

When the course of practice is accomplished, the spirit is liberated from the physical body – the temporary "house of fire" that binds the spirit to the material world. The spirit is realized and the adept can then ascend in full consciousness to the spiritual planes during this present life ("in broad daylight"):

> When reaching this stage, all is empty – within and without. There is neither existence nor nonexistence. Your form and spirit (*xíngshén,* 'body and soul') have both become subtle; tigers or rhinos can do no harm; swords or wars cannot affect you. The transient house of fire (*i.e.* one's physical body) can no longer tie you down. Summoned by precious incantations (*bǎofú,* secret words believed to possess spiritual power), you ascend in broad daylight *(báirì fēishēng).*… Is this not blissful?
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17*

When spiritual transformation is complete, the spirit is liberated from the limitations of the physical body and is free to ascend at will to spiritual heights. The "inherent" refers to the primal spiritual nature; the "acquired" is the body and all else that obscures the essential spirit:

> When the acquired is totally transformed and the inherent is pure and whole, there appears a radiant jewel-like seed, its light permeating heaven and pervading earth in every direction. Then you will see the *Dào* in everything, everywhere. Then your work is done, your practice complete. Then you break through space, and ascend to heaven in broad daylight *(báirì fēishēng).* Having no further need for the garb of skin, flesh and blood, you completely relinquish it. Just like when the refinement of medicine is complete, there is no further need for the elixir-mixing vessel *(dānfáng).*
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùdào lù, ZW268, DS18*

A similar description using symbolic Daoist imagery is found in a poem attributed to Zhōnglí Quán (*c.*C2nd CE), one of the eight immortals *(bāxiān).*[2] He explains that when the full course of practice is complete, the body, mind, and spirit are fully refined. The phoenix *(fènghuáng)* symbolizes heaven's favour, and the crane *(hè)* is a symbol of immortality:

> The practitioner's body will become pure *yáng,*
> then, naturally, neither cold nor heat can harm him.
> His jade-like (*i.e.* pure) body will be adorned
> with auspicious energies and colourful clouds.
> Phoenixes *(fènghuáng)* and cranes *(hè)*
> will come dancing to receive him face to face.…
>
> His name will be inscribed in the record of heavenly residents,
> and he will be called a true man *(zhēnrén).*
> With golden light *(jīnguāng)* enveloping his body,
> ordinary mortals will be dazzled by him.

A guard of honour
will escort him, left and right.
Immortal cranes *(xiānhè)* will guide him to the Origin *(yuán),*
and he will ascend to heaven in broad daylight *(báirì fēishēng)*
to visit the Jade Capital *(i.e.* the ultimate *Dào).*

Zhōnglí Quán, "Pòmí zhēngdào gē," DZ270; cf. PZGS

See also: **fēi**, **yǔhuà**.

1. *Cf. Dàodé jīng* 17, 34.
2. See **bāxiān** (7.1).

bǎodào (C) *Lit.* to preserve *(bǎo)* the *Dào;* to protect or to keep the *Dào.*

Attributing his words to Lǎozǐ, the anonymous author of the *Scripture on Western Ascension* (C5th CE) writes:

> Human beings are within the *Dào;* the *Dào* is within human beings. Fish are within water; water is within fish. When the *Dào* leaves, human beings die; when water runs dry, fish perish.
>
> Thus the sage knows that he will return to the state before he was born. He abandons pride and indulgence *(jiāoshē),* and does away with worries and hankerings. For this reason, when his physical body vanishes, his spirit remains. . . . Preserving *(bǎo)* the *Dào* and cultivating the permanent is what we call 'union with the mystery'.
>
> *Xīshēng jīng 32, DZ666, JY84, in DZ726 6:1a–2b; cf. TMPS p.252*

See also: **meditation (Daoism)** (8.5).

bàoyī, **bàodào** (C) *Lit.* to embrace *(bào)* the One *(yī);* to hold fast to the *Dào;* to cherish the One *(yī)* or the *Dào;* embracing unity; always keeping the *Dào* in mind; maintaining constant awareness of the *Dào;* cultivating the *Dào;* remembering one's true and original nature and keeping it immersed in the One, the *Dào.* Embracing the One or embracing the *Dào* requires the surrender of self, the death of ego, the total annihilation of separateness, and complete merging into the great Oneness.

While the majority of human beings have become lost in the distinctions of duality – in right and wrong, good and bad, beauty and ugliness, *etc.* – the sage has brought all such opposites into a perfect union within himself. He is therefore said to have encircled them in perfect unity – to have 'embraced the One'. The sage thus represents perfection and becomes the ideal role model for human beings. The *Dàodé jīng* (*c.*C3rd BCE) says:

> The sage embraces the One *(bàoyī),*
> and becomes an exemplar for all under heaven.
>
> *Dàodé jīng 22; cf. WLT p.134*

The influential *Xiǎng'ěr* commentary (C2nd CE) on the *Dàodé jīng* explains this stanza:

> The One *(yī)* is the *Dào,* which has established the precepts *(jiè).* The sage *(shèngrén),* through practising the precepts, embraces the One *(bàoyī).*
>
> *Lǎozǐ xiǎng'ěr zhù, S6825; cf. EDSB p.116*

More extensively, according to the *Book of Master Wén* (*c.*200 BCE), sages live according to the principle of *wúwéi* (non-action), of unforced, non-manipulative, and selfless action. In this way, they "embrace the *Dào (bàodào)*":

> Saints *(shèngrén)* make no show, yet they are at peace. They ask for little, yet they are wealthy. They do not appear to be giving, yet they are compassionate. They do not speak, yet they are truthful. They seek nothing, yet they are (spiritually) attained. They dwell in non-action *(bùwéi),* yet they are (spiritually) accomplished. They are natural and spontaneous, yet they preserve the ultimate Truth. They embrace the *Dào (bàodào)* with faith and sincerity. People of the world follow them like the echoes of a sound, emulate them like the shadows of an image. What they cultivate is the Root (the *Dào*).
>
> *Wénzǐ 2, DZ746*

Human beings generally remain unaware of their original nature, but not so the sages. By complete surrender of the self in the practice of *wúwéi,* they are able to embrace the One:

> To use the *Dào* to preserve one's (original) form *(xíng)* requires non-action *(wúwéi).* To use techniques that prolong life requires action *(yǒuwéi).* In people of great virtue, the inherent Energy *(xiāntiān zhī qì)* is not lost, but (is preserved in) its pure *yáng* (*i.e.* spiritual) form. Remaining centred, embracing the One *(bàoyī),* they are able to preserve their original true form *(běnlái zhēnxíng).* In ordinary people, the inherent Energy *(xiāntiān zhī qì)* is veiled, *yáng* (*i.e.* spirit) is buried beneath *yīn* (*i.e.* materiality).… First secure the foundation of life, entering into non-action *(wúwéi)* by taking action; only then can Reality be attained.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Bǎizì bēi zhù, ZW257, DS3*

Master Qiū Chǔjī (C13th) recalls a saying of his own master Wáng Zhé. Discussing *wúwéi,* Wáng Zhé advises practitioners to detach themselves from the impermanent body that masquerades as the 'self', to embrace the *Dào,* and to accept illness and death for what they are:

> The way of non-action *(wúwéi)* is first to detach yourself from your family, and then to detach yourself from the body. If you are to be ill, let the illness come. If you are to die, let it be so. Relentlessly, until your death, embrace *(bào)* the *Dào* and pass away. Entrust yourself to and obey the decrees of heaven.
>
> *Wáng Zhé, quoted by Qiū Chǔjī, in Zhēnxiān zhízhǐ yǔlù, DZ1256 1:13a; cf. in TPEQ p.148*

In his poem 'Embracing the One', master Lǐ Dàochún (C13th) describes the creative process. Alluding to the *Dàodé jīng,* he outlines how the *Dào* gave rise to the One *(yī),* which divided into the duality of *yīn* and *yáng* (negative and positive, *etc.*), and thence into the myriad created things that delude and confuse the spirit. Embracing the One entails returning to the "inherent, original, universal One":

> The Beyond Ultimate *(wújí)* polarizes
> and becomes the Great Ultimate *(tàijí).*
> The spreading and pervading of the subtleties by the Great Ultimate
> begins with the One *(yī).*
>
> When the One *(yī)* divides,
> it becomes two: *yīn* and *yáng.*
> The myriad beings, heaven, earth, and humans
> emerge from here.
>
> The inherent true One *(yī)*
> is entirely empty and conscious.
> It has no beginning and no end:
> it never changes.
> But when it takes form,
> the spirit develops intellect,
> which discriminates good and bad,
> opportunity and cause.
> It seeks passions and pursues delusions,
> which grow into thorns and briars.
> It is dazzled and confused by the senses
> of smell, taste, sight, and sound.

If you can truly investigate the original Source
within the One *(yī),*
it is not difficult to revert to that source *(běn)*
and restore the Origin *(yuán).*
Husband and wife *(i.e. yīn* and *yáng)* merge
in the midst of stillness. . . .

All of a sudden,
bursting from the gate at the forehead,
radiant *(shuòshuò)* golden light *(jīnguāng)*
fills the spiritual chamber *(shénshì). . . .*

Who is the master there within?
It is the inherent, original, universal One *(yī).*
Lǐ Dàochún, Zhōnghé jí, DZ249, JY226

Master Liú Yīmíng (1734–1821) advises students to be always consistent in their practice, avoiding any weakness. Only by unfailingly "embracing the *Dào*" until death will the ultimate Truth "be revealed":

From start to finish,
always be with the One *(yī).*
Profound achievement is hard to attain
without effort in practice.
The Truth *(zhēn)* can only be revealed
by dying while embracing the *Dào (bàodào).*
Liú Yīmíng, Xuérén èrshísì yào 24, in Jīndān sìbǎi zì jiě, ZW266, DS12

If a practitioner diligently and carefully follows the instructions received from an enlightened master, there will be no room for untruth or illusion. While "embracing the *Dào*", he will remain "present with the Truth":

Apply firmness with softness; be unassuming outwardly, but bright within, such that you see without eyes. Live in peace and profundity while embracing *(bào)* the *Dào*. Be still with the One *(yī),* taking your (original) nature and (true spiritual) life as the single thing of importance. Then you will automatically possess true happiness, and will not be attached to false pleasures. You will be still at all times, and well situated in all affairs. This is to be present with the Truth, giving no admittance to the false.
Liú Yīmíng, Zhōuyì (54) chǎnzhēn, ZW245, DS13

While maintaining strength and determination in spiritual practice, students should embrace the *Dào* in their inner being while outwardly behaving naturally and without drawing attention to themselves:

> Be firm, yet be humble. Conceal your light to nurture it in obscurity. Live life while embracing *(bào)* the *Dào.* Do not let the outer false destroy the inner Truth. This is how to return naturally by way of the *Dào.*
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Zhōuyì (9) chǎnzhēn, ZW245, DS13*

On this point, master Liú Yīmíng draws inspiration from the *Yìjīng* (at least C9th BCE) and uses the idea of travelling by foot rather than riding in luxury as a metaphor for the humility required for "embracing the *Dào*":

> Be resolute *(gāng),* then the mind will be clear. Humble the self, then the self will be subdued. Live life while embracing the *Dào (bàodào),* as if forging ahead on foot. Resolutely forging ahead on foot will not let the outward false destroy the inner Truth, therefore one is content to walk on foot without a carriage. This is the way to forge ahead resolutely in uprightness.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Zhōuyì (22) chǎnzhēn, ZW245, DS13*

A story is related in the *Zhuāngzǐ* (*c.*C3rd BCE) of a certain Nánróng Chú who one day visits a Daoist master in the hope of finding a solution to his troubles. In the group meeting, Nánróng Chú tells the master Gēngsāngzǐ that all he wants to know is: what is the basic rule for preserving one's spiritual life? Gēngsāngzǐ's response echoes the frequently quoted tenth chapter of the *Dàodé jīng,* that the essence of spiritual life is to "embrace the One" while attending to external affairs:

> Ah! The basic rule of preserving (spiritual) life.
>
> Can you embrace the One *(bàoyī)?* Can you retain it? Can you, without tortoise shell or divining stalks, foretell fortune and misfortune? Can you put an end to all action? Can you be still? Can you give up thinking about others and seek within your self? Can you be unlimited and truly free? Can you be unhindered and all-encompassing?
>
> Can you be a little baby? The baby howls all day, yet its throat never gets hoarse – harmony at its height! The baby clenches its fists all day, yet its fingers never get cramped – virtue is all it holds onto. The baby stares all day without blinking its eyes – it has no preferences in the world of external things.
>
> To move without knowing where you are going, to sit at home without knowing what you are doing, traipsing and trailing about

with other things, riding along with them on the same wave – this is the basic rule of preserving (spiritual) life. This, and nothing more.

Zhuāngzǐ 23; cf. CTW p.253

According to Lǎozǐ, once a person has firmly grasped the *Dào,* he becomes inseparable from it, and his virtue continues to affect many generations:

He who is well established (in the *Dào*)
cannot be pulled away.
He who has a firm embrace *(bào)*
cannot be separated from it.

Dàodé jīng 54; cf. TTCT p195

See also: **meditation (Daoism)** (8.5), **shǒuyī** (8.5).

baqā' (A), **baqā** (P) *Lit.* permanence, duration, survival, persistence; immortality, eternal life, everlastingness; subsistence or abiding (in God). In mundane language, *baqā'* means 'survival', as in 'survival of the fittest', or the 'survival' or 'persistence' of some human characteristic. *Al-Bāqī* (He who abides, the everlasting One) is one of the ninety-nine names of *Allāh.* The terms originate in the *Qur'ān,* which uses the derivative *abqá* (more enduring, more lasting) or the verb *yabqá* (to abide forever, to endure):

What is with you must pass away:
What is with *Allāh* will endure *(bāqī).*

Qur'ān 16:96; cf. AYA

All that is on earth will pass away *(fānī):*
But the face of your Lord will abide *(yabqá)* (forever) –
full of majesty, bounty, and honour.

Qur'ān 55:26–27; cf. AYA

In Sufism, *baqā'* is the state reached through *fanā'* (passing away or annihilation of the self), hence the expression, *al-baqā' ba'd al-fanā'* (abiding after passing away), a doctrine said by Hujwīrī to have been first propounded by Abū Sa'īd al-Kharrāz,[1] though others have attributed it to Bisṭāmī. *Fanā'* and *baqā'* together imply identification with the divine Being so that individual existence is obliterated and the soul subsists or abides only in and through God. This is far more than a mere psychological stance or an emotional state. By pairing the two terms, the Sufis affirm that after annihilation in the Beloved, there is life, a different life:

> When Junayd was asked about annihilation *(fanā')* and subsistence *(baqā'),* he replied, "Subsistence *(baqā')* has to do with God, and annihilation *(fanā')* with what is less than God."
>
> *Junayd, in Tadhkirat al-Awliyā', TAN2 p.33, in SSE12 p.140*

> He who has found the Essence *(Ḥaqīqat)* averts his gaze from all created things and, in complete annihilation *(fanā),* seeing only the universal One, he hastens towards the fullness of eternal life *(baqā).*
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb II, KMM p.23; cf. in KM p.20*

Baqā' also means residue or remainder. In this sense also, Sufis use the term to mean the eternal Essence within everything: that which endures when all that is perishable or changeable has been discarded.[2]

A number of composite terms using *baqā'* are found in Sufi terminology. These include *baqā' billāh* (subsistence in God, eternal life in God), *baqā-yi źikr-i Ḥaqq* (subsistence of the remembrance of God), *baqā' fī al-Ḥaqīqah* (immortality in Reality), *baqā' al-Qadīm* (subsistence in the eternal Being), and *dār al-baqā'* (dwelling of permanence, the hereafter).

See also: **fanā'**.

1. Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-Maḥjūb* XI, XIV, *KMM* pp.180, 311, *KM* pp.143, 242.
2. Al-Qāshānī, *Sharḥ-i Manāzil al-Sā'rīn, SMSQ* p.253, in *FLI* p.198.

basṭ (A/P) *Lit.* expansion; a state of bliss and expansion of the spiritual heart; the loss of all sense of individual self in an expansion of consciousness that is infused with intoxicating and exhilarating spiritual joy or bliss. In the state of *basṭ,* the expanded heart is flooded with divine grace and revelations of God's light and love, and the seeker's heart is overwhelmed with bliss. Hence, the epithet of God (*al-Bāsiṭ,* the Expander, the Releaser of hearts[1]). Ibn al-ʿArabī defines *basṭ:*

> It signifies the state of one who encompasses all things, while nothing encompasses him. It is called the state of hope. It is also called a subtle feeling produced by an intimation of acceptance, mercy, and intimacy.
>
> *Ibn al-ʿArabī, Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Ṣūfīyah, ISMA p.58, WSNE pp.93–94*

In Sufism, *basṭ* is commonly contrasted with *qabḍ* (contraction, constriction), which is the state of the heart in the absence of love, joy, and light. The heart is constricted and dark, and the inner flow of divine grace seems blocked. The terms originate in the *Qur'ān,* "It is God that gives you want *(qabḍ)* and plenty *(basṭ),*"[2] or, as another translation has it, "It is God who lessens and increases."[3]

In the context, the verse means that God determines whether or not a person will have sufficient for their needs. The Sufi concept is more clearly expressed in:

> If God wishes to guide a man,
> He opens *(yashraḥ)* his breast to *islām* (surrender);
> And whoever He wishes to lead astray,
> he makes his breast narrow, tight *(ḍayyiqan),*
> as if he were engaged in a sheer ascent.
> *Qur'ān 6:125; cf. AYA, KPA, MGK*

Mystics of all traditions have described the alternating states experienced by spiritual seekers. In fact, even the ups and downs of normal life, experienced by everyone, are reflections of the alternation of *basṭ* and *qabḍ.* Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Illāh observes that the soul relishes the periods of *basṭ,* but finds it hard to see any benefit in *qabḍ:*

> Through the existence of joy
> the soul gets its share in expansion *(basṭ);*
> But there is no share for the soul in contraction *(qabḍ).*
> *Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Illāh, Kitāb al-Ḥikam 9:82, HAAI p.60, BWIC p.69, SAKH p.36*

However, he points out that it is by means of these two that a soul is inspired to move forward, while at the same time being restrained from spiritual arrogance:

> It is more dreadful for gnostics to be expanded than to be contracted, for only a few can stay within the limits of proper conduct in expansion *(basṭ).*
> *Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Illāh, Kitāb al-Ḥikam 9:81, HAAI p.60, BWIC p.68, SAKH p.36*

Many other Sufis have said the same. Al-Junayd and others have emphasized the importance of the state of sobriety *(ṣaḥw)* or peaceful balance that follows an experience of *basṭ.*

In spiritual life, the interplay of the two has a purifying effect that leads, ultimately, to spiritual maturity. As Hujwīrī points out, these two states are a necessary part of the path; they are unavoidable and beyond human control. Moreover, the heart or soul contracts when the mind is active or expansive, and the heart expands when the mind is subdued:

> *Qabḍ* (contraction) and *basṭ* (expansion) are two involuntary states that cannot be induced by any human act or banished by any human exertion.... *Qabḍ* denotes the contraction of the heart *(qalb)* in the state of being veiled *(ḥijāb),* and *basṭ* denotes the expansion of the

> heart *(qalb)* in the state of revelation *(kashf).* Both states proceed from God without effort on the part of man.… Bāyazīd said: "The contraction *(qabḍ)* of hearts *(qulūb)* consists in the expansion *(basṭ)* of the mind *(nafs),* and the expansion *(basṭ)* of hearts *(qulūb)* in the contraction *(qabḍ)* of the mind *(nafs).*"
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb XXIV, KMM pp.488–90; cf. KM pp.374–75*

Ibn al-ʿArabī and others have observed that opposites come together in the perfect mystic or gnostic, for he is entirely Real, and the Real contains all opposites in Itself.[4]

See also: **qabḍ**.

1. *Qurʾān* 13:26.
2. *Qurʾān* 2:245; *cf. AYA.*
3. *Qurʾān* 2:245, *QAL.*
4. Ibn al-ʿArabī, *Meccan Revelations* 2:512.9, *FMIA4* (3:219) p.211, *SPK* p.375.

beatitude Supreme spiritual blessedness, joy or bliss; eternal blessedness; also, the name given to a group of Jesus' sayings in *Matthew,*[1] where he identifies various types of people who will receive the blessings of heaven; also, an honorific title given to a patriarch of the Orthodox Church.

According to Christian belief, final beatitude of the soul in God only takes place after death. Angelus Silesius puts it poetically:

> Here, I still flow in God, as does a brook, in time:
> there, I shall be the Sea of beatitude divine.
>
> *Angelus Silesius, Cherubinic Wanderer 4:135, CW p.94*

And he portrays what he means by beatitude:

> What is beatitude? A flood of joy exalted,
> a gazing upon God, a love that never falters,
> the sweetest Jesus kiss, the longed-for life immortal:
> Not for an instant be from the Beloved parted.
>
> *Angelus Silesius, Cherubinic Wanderer 3:68, CW p.76*

It is, he says, available to everyone, but it requires complete abandonment to the Divine and the relinquishing of all worldly attachments:

> Beatitude is all. Who wants to touch the All
> will have to, here and now, dispense with all for all.
>
> *Angelus Silesius, Cherubinic Wanderer 6:105, CW p.132*

> O man, beatitude is placed within your hands,
> if only you submit, and freely give consent.
> *Angelus Silesius, Cherubinic Wanderer 1:20, CW p.40*

He admits that the best he can hope for in human life is just a "taste" of the Divine:

> The highest beatitude to which I can aspire
> will be the taste of God, how sweet He is to savour.
> *Angelus Silesius, Cherubinic Wanderer 5:319, CW p.123*

Archimandrite Sophrony repeats the same belief:

> To man has been given the hope of receiving in the world to come the gift of divine likeness and full beatitude. The best he can have in this world, however, is a pledge of this future state. Within the confines of his earthly experience, it is given to him to be able during prayer to dwell in God while remembering the world. But when he arrives at a more complete abiding in God, the world is forgotten, just as a man who cleaves to the earth with his whole self forgets God.
> *Archimandrite Sophrony, Monk of Mount Athos, MMA p.69*

Writing of the absorbing bliss of mystical experience, Jan van Ruysbroek speaks more generally of the "spirit (being) … rapt out of itself, its activity stilled in enjoyment and beatitude".[2] He describes the three Persons of the Christian Trinity being absorbed as one in the "abyssal beatitude of God":

> Each single spirit is a glowing coal which God has lit from the flame of His infinite love; and all of us are gathered up in one burning and inextinguishable fire with the Father and Son in the unity of the Holy Spirit, where even the divine Persons are, as it were, rapt from themselves in the unity of their essence into a bottomless abyss of simple beatitude. Therein is neither Father nor Son, nor Holy Spirit, nor any created thing, but only an eternal Essence, which is the substance of the divine Persons. There we are all reunited and created anew; it is our supersubstantial Essence. There all fruition is consummated and perfected in essential beatitude. There God exists in His simple essence, without activity, in endless rest, darkness without mode of being, nameless existence, the super-essence of all creatures, and an abyssal beatitude of God and all the saints.
> *Jan van Ruysbroek, Seven Steps 7; cf. SSL pp.61–62*

"Enlightened men", he writes, seeking the "bare Essence of the Godhead",

> have found within themselves an essential contemplation which is above reason and without reason,… through which they immerse themselves in a wayless abyss of fathomless beatitude, where the Trinity of the divine Persons possesses their nature in the essential Unity.
>
> *Jan van Ruysbroek, Book of Supreme Truth 12, SSJR p.245*

See also: **blessedness**, **joy**.

1. *Matthew* 5:3–11.
2. Jan van Ruysbroek, *Seven Steps* 7; *cf. SSL* p.60.

běnjué (C), **hongaku** (J) *Lit.* original *(běn, hon)* enlightenment *(jué, kaku);* innate, intrinsic, or inherent enlightenment; the notion that all sentient beings possess an unborn and eternal *buddha*-nature (C. *fóxìng*), *tathāgata-garbha* (embryo of buddhahood) or enlightened *dharma*-body *(dharmakāya),* and are thus inherently enlightened; contrasted with the process of gradually manifesting or actualizing enlightenment (C. *shǐjué,* J. *shikaku*), which consists of the meditation and purification practices that bring about an increasing realization of the inherent *buddha*-nature. The belief in an inherently enlightened nature is close to that of the Hindu concept of the *ātman* as the real and enduring self – *ātman* being understood at both the individual and the highest level of Reality Itself. For this reason, it was deemed heretical by some earlier Buddhist schools.

The term seems to have arisen in various Chinese Buddhist texts as a fusion of *Mahāyāna* philosophies concerning *tathāgata-garbha* and *ālaya-vijñāna* (storehouse of consciousness), understood as two aspects of one mind. The inherent or original aspect of the mind is that of the *tathāgata-garbha* or inherent *buddha*-nature. This is obscured from the consciousness of an ordinary being by the mass of impure impressions and karmic potentialities, which require the purification process of 'actualizing enlightenment' (right living and meditation) in order for the inherent enlightenment of the *buddha*-nature to shine forth. It is then realized that the enlightenment attained by effort is the same as the original or inherent enlightenment.

Buddhas and enlightened beings always see this original enlightened mind, whereas struggling sentient beings exist within the impurity and deluded nature of their seemingly individual minds. But the mind is the same – it is simply a matter of perspective. Original enlightenment is not something far removed from the here and now; the reality of existence as it is experienced is that of the inherent, original enlightenment. The *buddha*-nature is continuously and universally present. In this sense, there is no difference between enlightenment and *saṃsāra.* It is, again, only a matter of perspective – of the level of consciousness through which things are perceived.

From early medieval times, the East Asian Buddhist traditions, especially those of *Chán* and *Zen* Buddhism, also explored the possibility that since enlightenment is innate, awakening to its reality could be sudden, rather than a gradual and lengthy process of meditation and purification. Gradual awakening *(jiànwù)* implies that enlightenment results from the gradual removal of inner impurities, generally over a number of lifetimes. Sudden awakening *(dùnwù)* is based on the understanding that all beings are inherently enlightened by virtue of their innate *buddha*-nature *(fóxìng).* Enlightenment therefore consists of conscious recognition of this truth.

The various Buddhist schools and sub-schools in both China and Japan (especially the *Tendai* and its various offshoots) developed a range of ideas and associated terminology based upon various permutations of original, actualizing, sudden and gradual enlightenment. One commonly mentioned classification is known as *dùnwù jiànxiū* (sudden awakening and gradual cultivation), and indicates that initial awakenings are followed by gradual refinement through purification. The philosophy of *hongaku* saw its greatest development by the *Tendai* school from the end of the Heian period up to the beginning of the *Kamakura* period (*i.e.* C12th–13th).

Among the most influential of the early texts was the Chinese *Dàshéng qǐxìnlùn* ('Awakening of Faith in *Mahāyāna*', J. *Daijō kisihinron giki,* S. *Mahāyāna-shraddhotpāda Shāstra*). Originally attributed to the Indian Ashvaghosha, it is now generally agreed among scholars to be an original sixth-century Chinese composition. It is in this text that the terms for original and actualized enlightenment first appear, where they are analysed in considerable detail. Among the practices recommended for the process of actualized enlightenment are the cultivation of tranquillity and mystical insight (C. *zhǐguān,* S. *shamatha-vipashyanā*), together with the practice of no-mind or no-thought (C. *wúniàn,* J. *munen*).

The *Dàshéng qǐxìnlùn* differentiates two aspects of Mind. One is the absolute Reality of all things, which is termed 'Suchness *(Tathatā)*'. The other is the relative mind that presents itself as this world, *i.e. saṃsāra.* Even so, this world is founded in the Absolute, on Suchness *(Tathatā),* a term that is understood in the same way as the earlier *Mahāyāna* terms: *Dharmadhātu* (*Dharma* essence, world of Reality), *Tathāgata-garbha* (embryo of buddhahood), and *Dharmakāya* (*Dharma* body, true form). These terms are all equated in *Dàshéng qǐxìnlùn* with original enlightenment *(běnjué).* The author is seeing things from a mystical rather than an analytical or scholarly perspective, observing that all these terms for the Absolute refer to the same Reality, which is in any case incapable of being described:

> The Mind in terms of the Absolute is the one world of Reality *(Dharmadhātu)* and the essence of all and every aspect of existence. That which is called 'the essential nature of the Mind' is unborn and

imperishable. It is only through illusion that everything seems to be differentiated. If one is freed from illusion, then objects no longer have the appearance of things with completely independent existences. Therefore, all things from the beginning transcend all forms of verbalization, description and conceptualization and are, in the final analysis, undifferentiated, free from alteration, and indestructible. They are only of the one Mind; hence the name Suchness *(Tathatā).*

All verbal explanations are relative and without validity, for they are used merely in respect of illusions and are incapable of denoting Suchness. The term Suchness likewise has no attributes that can be verbally specified.…

The mind as phenomena *(i.e.* as *saṃsāra)* is established on the *Tathāgata-garbha.* What is called the storehouse consciousness *(ālaya-vijñāna)* is that in which 'neither birth nor death *(nirvāṇa)*' diffuses harmoniously with 'birth and death *(saṃsāra)*', and yet in which both are neither identical nor different. This (storehouse) consciousness has two aspects that embrace all states of existence and create all states of existence. They are: (a) the aspect of enlightenment, and (b) the aspect of non-enlightenment.…

The essence of Mind is free of thoughts. The characteristic of that which is free of thoughts is analogous to that of the sphere of empty space that pervades everywhere. The one without any second, *i.e.* the absolute aspect of the world of Reality *(Dharmadhātu)* is none other than the undifferentiated *Dharmakāya,* the 'essence body' of the *Tathāgata.* Since the essence of Mind is established in the *Dharmakāya,* it is to be called the original enlightenment (C. *běnjué*). Why? Because original enlightenment (C. *běnjué*) differentiates the essence of Mind from the essence of Mind in the process of actualization of enlightenment (C. *shǐjué*); the process of actualization of enlightenment (C. *shǐjué*) is none other than the process of integrating the identity with the original enlightenment (C. *běnjué*).…

The essence of Suchness knows no increase or decrease in ordinary men, the Hinayanists (Theravadins, early Buddhists), the *bodhisattvas,* or the *buddhas.* It was not brought into existence in the beginning, nor will it cease to be at the end of time; it is eternal through and through.

From the beginning, Suchness in its nature is fully provided with all excellent qualities; namely, it is endowed with the light of great wisdom, the qualities of illuminating the entire universe, of true cognition, and mind pure in its self-nature; of eternity, bliss, Self, and purity; of refreshing coolness, immutability, and freedom. It is endowed with these excellent qualities which outnumber the sands of the Ganges, which are not independent of, disjointed from or different from the essence of Suchness, and which are suprarational attributes

> of buddhahood. Since it is endowed completely with all these, and is not lacking anything, it is called the *Tathāgata-garbha* when latent, and also the *Dharmakāya* of the *Tathāgata.*
>
> *Dàshéng qǐxìnlùn 1, T32 1666:576a8–b16, 579a12–20; cf. AFYH pp.39–40, 43, 66*

See also: **yīxīn**.

běnlái miànmù (C) *Lit.* original *(běnlái)* face *(miànmù);* inherent or primordial look or appearance; inherent state of non-duality or enlightenment; a phrase found in the Buddhist *Tánjīng* ('Platform *Sūtra*')[1] and perpetuated in the famous *Chán* Buddhist *gōng àn* (J. *kōan*): "What was your original face *(běnlái miànmù)* before your parents were born?", which appears in the *Wúménguān* (J. *Mumonkan,* 'Gateless Gate')[2], a collection of forty-eight *gōng àns* compiled by the *Chán* Buddhist master Wúmén Huìkāi (C13th); in Daoism, also abbreviated as *běnmiàn.*

The Daoist master Zhāng Sānfēng (C14th) writes that this state of original purity and clarity is beyond the body:

> When spirit *(shén)* and life energy *(qì)* are clear and bright: this is when the original face *(běnlái miànmù)* is revealed. However, the (original face) that is being sought is not in the body.
>
> *Dàoyán qiǎnjìn shuō, in Zhāng Sānfēng xiānshēng quánjí, JY236 2:32a, ZW125*

Contrasting the impermanent nature of body and mind with the permanence of the spirit, the *Secret of the Golden Flower* (*Jīnhuá zōngzhǐ,* C17th) advises practitioners to persist with their spiritual practice and to experience thereby the original state or spirit within themselves. Only in this way can they recover their original, essential nature or original face, and thus transcend all duality and change:

> Compared to the (rest of) creation, human beings are like mayflies (which live only briefly). Compared to the great *Dào,* the creation is also a transient reflection. Only one's original spirit *(yuánshén)* or true nature *(zhēnxìng)* transcend space and time. (Bodily) vital essence *(jīng)* and life energy *(qì)* degenerate along with the rest of creation, but the original spirit *(yuánshén)* remains inherent and boundless. It is the beginning from which heaven and earth are created.
>
> If a practitioner can preserve *(shǒu)* and protect *(hù)* his original spirit *(yuánshén),* his condition will transcend *yīn* and *yáng* (duality), rising beyond the three realms *(sānjiè)* until his (true) nature, which is called the original face *(běnlái miànmù),* is finally revealed.
>
> *Jīnhuá zōngzhǐ 2, JH94, JY161, XB1, ZW334*

To reveal this original face, master Yáng Dàoshēng (C15th) recommends taming the mind and emotions:

> The practice of enlightened people is to forsake attachments, to give up passions, to weaken the hardness of the mind, to soften the sharpness of the mind, to persevere in subduing the mind, and to eliminate all negativity from the mind in order to reveal the original face *(běnlái miànmù)* one had before birth.
>
> *Yáng Dàoshēng, Zhēnquán, JY244, ZW373*

The purity and simplicity of a piece of pottery before it is adorned with decoration reminds master Liú Yīmíng (1734–1821) of the original state of a human being prior to conditioning by material existence. He explains that enlightened masters throughout the ages have taught methods of returning to this simplicity and purity, of going back to the beginning ("return to the original") in order to recover their original state and become a real person *(zhēnrén)* – a genuine and complete human being:

> Various clay vessels – each with its own innate character *(běnzhì)* – are made without ornamentation. But once decorated with colours and ornamented with gold and jade, though they may be exquisitely adorned, they lose that innate character.
>
> As I observe this, I realize that this is the *dào* (way, principle) of returning to simplicity *(pǔ)* and reverting to purity *(chún)*.
>
> Human nature is originally pure and clear *(chúnbái)* without blemish; but after birth, the worldly senses are activated and the intellect *(zhīshí)* develops. Moreover, people accumulate habits and attachments. People … scheme and contrive, … tell lies in public and cheat behind others' backs, … take misery for pleasure, and arsenic for medicine. Their innate nature *(běnzhì)* is so deeply buried that – even if they are destroying their body and sacrificing their lives – they do not give it a second thought. Even though they are inviting calamity and bringing on misfortune, they are unaware of it.
>
> Therefore, the ancient sages taught people to know the good and return to the original, to return to simplicity *(pǔ)* and revert to purity *(chún)* so that the original state *(běnlái miànmù)* should be restored.
>
> To restore the original state *(běnlái miànmù)* is to be clear and unconcealed, naked and free, without a single speck of defilement, and completely untouched by worldly attachments *(yuán,* causes, *karma)*. This state is the embryo of sages and the worthy, the seed of immortals and the enlightened. They can be called real people *(zhēnrén)*.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùdào lù, ZW268, DS18*

Master Liú Yīmíng refers to "ancient sages" who throughout the ages have taught the way to reverse the process of dissipation ("downward scattering") into the myriad created things. He describes the method of recovering one's original and innate condition by complete submission to the *Dào:*

> Practitioners of the *Dào* – if you could understand the desire of the ancient sages to save people from downward scattering, you would venerate and submit to heaven, be grateful to and remember the Origin, seek life while dying, and look for grace in calamity.… You would be in the original state of being *(běnlái miànmù)* before birth. Then how could there be downward scattering?
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Kǒngyì (59) chǎnzhēn, Dàxiàng zhuàn, ZW246*

For success in this endeavour, he affirms the need for earnest and conscientious practice:

> Work your utmost to reduce and remove all the impurities acquired since your birth, so that your inherently original state *(běnlái miànmù)* is revealed. How then can you not reach the realm of eternal life *(chángshēng)?*
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Kǒngyì (61) chǎnzhēn, Dàxiàng zhuàn, ZW246*

Explaining to a questioner the meaning of certain terms used in *nèidān* (inner alchemy), master Zhào Bìchén (1860–1942) echoes the view of the semi-legendary master Zhāng Sānfēng (*c.*C12th) that the "original face" is only found by leaving the body. Here, "calming fire" is a synonym for "immobilization", by which Zhào Bìchén means stillness of mind and body while closing the eyes and focusing the attention within:

> The term 'calming fire' means immobilization with no concept of self and others, in order to ensure the emptiness of both body and mind. Then, all of a sudden, the practitioner will feel as if he has left his physical body and is looking at his original face *(běnlái miànmù).* Only this can be called real achievement.
>
> *Zhào Bìchén, Xìngmìng fǎjué míngzhǐ, ZW872; cf. TYAI p.54*

In the same text, Zhào Bìchén describes in greater detail the experience of recovering one's original innate spiritual state:

> When bright stars and flashes of light are frequently seen, they herald the mysterious gate *(xuánguān),* which manifests in space in front of the original cavity *(zǔqiào)* of spirit. It is the one real Energy *(zhēnyī*

> *zhī qì),* which is our original face *(běnlái miànmù),* boundless like the Great Void. Hence it is said: "The inherent one true Energy *(xiāntiān zhēnyī zhī qì)* arises out of the Nothingness *(xūwú).*"
>
> *Zhào Bìchén, Xìngmìng fǎjué míngzhǐ, ZW872; cf. TYAI p.70*

> After practising stillness and meditation for a long time, the true Energy *(zhēnqì)* within will become active. Then your original face *(běnlái miànmù),* which is the light of your (original) nature *(xìng)* will reveal itself. At that time, you will experience extraordinary serenity. Continue to concentrate your spirit *(shén),* to gather it together. This is the main purpose of nurturing your (true spiritual) life *(mìng).*
>
> *Zhào Bìchén, Xìngmìng fǎjué míngzhǐ, ZW872*

According to Liú Yīmíng, the process of physical life is actually a process of spiritual death. On the other hand, he says, the reversal of that process is the true purpose of life – to nurture the spirit and raise the consciousness. If one can understand this, he says, then one can attain and experience the eternal life of the spirit. The "five elements" are constituent aspects of material existence; the "five virtues" are the naturally good qualities that become perverted, becoming the "five thieves" by interaction with the material world:

> The gate of life and the door of death – that is: the gate or door of the opening *(qiào)* of the mysterious pass *(xuánguān)* – are essentially the same. Concealed within this gate or door are the energies of the five elements *(wǔxíng).* Going with the (downward) current of creation through this opening, the five elements conflict with and separate from each other, and the five virtues *(wǔdé)* become the five thieves *(wǔzéi).* Thus the door of life becomes the door of death, and the gate of life becomes the gate of death.
>
> Going against the current of creation through the opening, the five elements help each other to rise and return to the same one Energy, and the five thieves *(wǔzéi)* revert to being the five virtues *(wǔdé).* Then the door of death becomes the door of life and the gate of death becomes the gate of life. The pivotal working of life and death lies simply in going with or going against *nì* (the current of creation).
>
> Knowing this, one should seek the pivotal working of life within the pivotal working of death. Then, with constant practice, love is produced from within calamity, the gate of death and the door of death are transformed into the gate of life and the door of life, and eternal life is attained.… Turning the door of death into the door of life is achieved by decreasing false *yáng* and increasing true *yáng.* Turning the gate of death into the gate of life results from a decrease in false *yīn* and an increase in true *yīn.* When both true *yīn* and true *yáng* increase,

> they join into one, reverting to their original state *(běnmiàn),* that is, ultimately good, free of evil, inherently undifferentiated – the pivotal working of life flowing and circulating ceaselessly and eternally. How could this not prolong life?
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17*

Yīn and *yáng* are the negative and positive aspects of duality. The highest "true *yáng*" is the spirit. "True" *yīn* and *yáng* are the inherent *yīn* and *yáng* in the spiritual realms; "false" *yīn* and *yáng* are the corrupted *yīn* and *yáng* of this world.

Elsewhere, Liú Yīmíng describes the result of this reversion or return as "the restoration of life to the original state *(běnmiàn),* like an infant *(yīng'ér).*"[3] In another work, he says:

> To return *(fù)* is to turn inward and withdraw *(huífǎn).*... It is like human beings returning to their inherent *yáng;* the workings of life are discovered once again. Gradually they recover their pure *yáng,* revealing their original state *(běnmiàn).*
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Kǒngyì (23, 24) chǎnzhēn, Záguà zhuàn, ZW246*

Liú Yīmíng explains that this original state is recovered by transforming the "human mind *(rénxīn)*" back into a "true mind *(zhēnxīn)*", which is its "original state". This process of reversal involves clearing and purifying the mundane mind until the "true mind reveals itself":

> The true mind *(zhēnxīn)* is whole, luminous, pure, and without covering. It is not separate from any realms (in creation), but it is not attached to those realms either. If a human being can perceive realms without the mind, that is the true mind *(zhēnxīn),* the original state *(běnmiàn)* of enlightenment. There is no need to search for the original state *(běnmiàn)* of enlightenment anywhere else. The key is that where there is no human mind *(rénxīn),* there appears the true mind *(zhēnxīn).* When the true mind *(zhēnxīn)* reveals itself, enlightenment is instantly realized and the other shore is immediately reached.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17*

Liú Yīmíng explains that, to attain this superior state, it is necessary to submit oneself to the *Dào.* But disentangling and rising above the acquired "temperamental nature" in order to restore the mind to its original state cannot be achieved instantly – it can be a lifetime's work. Yet submission to the *Dào* in spiritual practice and in one's daily life is the key to revealing one's original state:

> To attain the *Dào,* you must know how to submit (to it), and submit to it in the right way. Moreover, you must persist in this correct submission. If you can be permanently submissive to the *Dào,* there will be firmness within softness, remaining unconcealed, unobscured, and unchanging until death. The temperamental nature acquired after birth will be discarded, revealing the original state *(běnmiàn)* that is inherently beyond distinctions and discrimination, and is submissive to the law of heaven. Then both nature and life are accomplished. Always be virtuous, soft, and submissive, then the *Dào* will be ultimate and final.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Zhōuyì (2) chǎnzhēn, ZW245, DS13*

1. *Liùzǔ dàshī fǎbǎo tánjīng, T48* 2008.
2. *Chánzōng wúménguān, T48* 2005.
3. Liú Yīmíng, *Wùdào lù, ZW268, DS18.*

běnxìng (C) *Lit.* original *(běn)* nature *(xìng);* source, root, foundational, or essential nature; the essential or original nature of a human being, the recovery or realization of which is the primary focus of Daoist practice. See **xìng**.

bhāva (S/Pa) *Lit.* becoming, being, existing; occurrence, appearance; condition, feeling, mood, sentiment, emotion; intention, attitude, disposition, nature; state of mind or being; the non-physical aspect of mind that brings sense perceptions into consciousness; from the verb *bhū* (to be); a term with a wide spread of derivative meanings.

In *yoga, bhāva* means 'being', 'condition', 'nature', 'disposition', 'mood', and 'feeling'. Yogic texts concerning *bhakti* (devotion) speak of five such moods or devotional states:[1]

1. *Shānta-bhāva.* Mood of tranquillity *(shānti),* of humility and the absence of disturbing thoughts and emotions.

2. *Dāsya-bhāva.* Mood of respectful service *(dāsya)* and dedication.

3. *Vātsalya-bhāva.* Mood like that of a calf *(vatsa);* a mood of tenderness and affection *(vātsalya),* like that of a parent or sibling.

4. *Sakhya-bhāva.* Mood of companionship *(sakhya),* like that between friends.

5. *Mādhurya-bhāva.* Mood of sweetness *(mādhurya),* like that between lovers.

Ultimately, these five moods mature into divine *rasa* or taste of the pure bliss of love and devotion for the Divine. Sometimes, *rasa* is divided into ten categories, including *shānta* and *vātsalya. Bhāva* also appears in expressions such as *unmanī-bhāva* (state of ascended mind), *samādhi-bhāva* (superconscious state), *ātma-bhāva* ('soul state', consciousness at the level of the *ātma* or soul), and *sarva-bhāva* (one's whole being, heart and soul).

Tantric texts also describe three kinds of human being: *pashu-bhāva* (animal), *vīra-bhāva* (heroic), and *divya-bhāva* (divine) – *i.e.* materialistic, higher-minded, and spiritual. Four states of worship are also defined. *Brahmabhāva* is the awareness that only *Brahma* or *Brahman,* the highest reality, exists. *Dhyāna-bhāva* is a state of constant contemplation or meditation *(dhyāna). Japa* (recitation) and *stava* (hymns and prayers) are lower states in which external aids are used to focus the mind. The lowest *bhāva* is *pūjā-bhāva,* which is external, ritualistic worship *(pūjā).*[2]

In Jainism, *bhāva* generally implies 'thought', 'mental attitude', and 'intention'. It refers to the inner aspect of some activity as opposed to the activity itself, which is known as *dravya* (actual). *Kāyotsarga* (abandonment of the body), for example, refers to meditation, and is understood to have two aspects. *Dravya* (actual) *kāyotsarga* relates to the stillness of the bodily posture, and *bhāva* (mental) *kāyotsarga* refers to the stillness of the mind. Likewise, *dravya pūjā* is the actual external act of worship, while *bhāva pūjā* is either the inner attitude of mind while performing acts of worship, or it is mental worship *per se,* in which practitioners perform the acts of worship in their minds only.

Again, *tapas* (austerity) is generally divided into six kinds of external austerity *(dravya-tapas)* and six of internal austerity *(bhāva-tapas). Dravya-tapas* includes such things as fasting, restricting one's diet, and various mortifications of the body. *Bhāva-tapas,* on the other hand, refers to mental qualities and exercises such as repentance, humility, study, and meditation *(dhyāna).* Similarly, *bhāva-hiṃsā* is violence in thought, while *dravya-hiṃsā* is external, physical violence; *bhāva-karma* is the *karma* that burdens the soul, while *dravya-karma* is the bodily *karma* of the present life; *bhāva-indriya* is the mental counterpart to the actual physical sense organ *(dravya-indriya);* a *bhāva-shrāvaka* (believing disciple or follower) is one who truly believes in the path or religion being followed, while a *dravya-shrāvaka* (outward disciple or follower) only conforms to the external form of things, practising obligatory rites but empty of true spirituality.

The attitude of mind while performing external practices is also known as *bhāva,* and it is understood that outer acts of worship *(pūjā),* fasting, charity *(dāna)* and so on have greater spiritual benefit and earn greater merit if the mental attitude is correct. If the act is performed mechanically, while the mind is distracted by thoughts of other things, then little benefit will accrue.

The correct intention behind fasting, for instance, is the elimination of *karma* and the absence of desire; fasting should not be undertaken with the hope of fulfilling material desires.

Other Jain terms using *bhāva* include *ashubha-bhāva* (shameful thought, sinful thought), *shuddha-bhāva* (pure thought), *mithyātva-bhāva* (incorrect belief), *samyak-bhāva* (correct belief), *kshamā-bhāva* (attitude of forgiveness, sincerely desiring forgiveness for some misdeed), and many others of a similar nature.

See also: **bhāva** (▸1), **svabhāva** (▸1).

1. See "bhāva," *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Yoga, EDYF.*
2. See John Woodroffe, *Introduction to Tantra Shāstra, ITSW* pp.58–64, 73.

bhavanga, **bhavanga-sota** (Pa) *Lit.* existence *(bhava)* factor *(anga)* stream *(sota);* life stream, existence stream, life flux or continuum; the continuity factor, the 'consciousness continuum' or 'stream of being' by which an individual maintains a sense of continuous existence and retains impressions or memories of experience; the tablet of the mind upon which are written the 'thought moments *(cittakkhaṇa)*' with which life is filled; the substratum of mind or consciousness within which all other mental activity takes place; a concept that first appears in the *Abhidhamma* literature (systematic analysis of the Pali Buddhist *suttas*), and elaborated in scholarly commentaries on the *suttas* and the *Abhidhamma.* Unlike the concept of the soul as an eternal, unconditioned and enduring entity, the *bhavanga* is continuously modified or conditioned by the mental and material circumstances of existence.

Buddhism does not accept the notion of a separate and enduring self or identity, and the concept of *bhavanga* provides an understanding of how consciousness can continue not only from one life to the next, but from one moment to another. It is understood as the first mental state experienced in the womb, to which the mind reverts between death and rebirth. It is the repository of memories and other events that define what are normally understood as individuality.

The *bhavanga* is sometimes identified with the subconscious. Although 'subconscious' was a term used by Sigmund Freud, he and other psychologists have found the term ambiguous and have preferred to use the term 'unconscious' for that part of the mind of which an individual is (and may remain) unaware, but which has an influence on the conscious mind. Since the mind cannot maintain simultaneous consciousness of all its knowledge and prior experience, the term 'subconscious' has also been used for knowledge and memories that can be recalled, but are not presently in the 'conscious' mind. Although, as concepts, there is some crossover between the *bhavanga-sota*

and the somewhat hazy notion of the 'subconscious', the two do not refer to the same aspects of the mind.

Abhidhamma texts identify two aspects of *bhavanga – bhavanga-sota* and *bhavanga-citta,* although there is little difference in meaning between the two. The *bhavanga-citta* refers to the consciousness or mind *(citta)* stream that continues in existence whenever active consciousness subsides, as in deep dreamless sleep. The *bhavanga-citta* is the inactive or resting state of mind to which the mind returns between 'thought moments' of actively perceiving and taking note of something. It functions like a person who awakens from sleep upon hearing some sound, investigates the sound, and then returns to sleep. The *Abhidhamma* texts further identify various aspects of *bhavanga-citta,* which relate to the more detailed functioning of the mind during the process of cognizing things perceived by the senses.

In *Yogāchāra* and some other Buddhist schools, the concept of *ālaya-vijñāna* (S. storehouse of consciousness) plays a similar role, as a receptacle of impressions and karmic seeds. At the time of enlightenment, the *ālaya-vijñāna* is cleansed of all its seeds and impressions and becomes perfected.

See also: **ālaya-vijñāna**, **death and rebirth in Theravāda Buddhism** (8.3).

bhūmi (S/Pa), **sa** (T), **dì** (C), **ji** (J) *Lit.* earth, ground, realm, field; stage, level, place, position; a term used both literally and metaphorically.

In the Hindu tradition, *bhūmiloka* (world of the earth, this world) refers to one of the three worlds *(triloka),* the other two being *pātālaloka* (world below, the nether worlds) and *devaloka* (world of the gods, the heavenly worlds). This world – along with heaven and hell – is also described as *bhoga-bhūmi* (field of fruition), a place where the fruits of past lives are experienced. This applies especially to non-human forms, which do not create new *karma,* but only reap the fruits of the past. The converse is *karma-bhūmi* (field of action), which for human beings applies to this world, where they both create and reap the fruit of past *karma.*

In Jainism, *bhoga-bhūmi* is a heavenly realm where no action *(karma)* is required. All needs are met by the mythological, wish-fulfilling *Kalpavṛiksha* (*Kalpa* tree). It is a world without *karma (akarma-bhūmi),* contrasted with this world of *karma-bhūmi* where souls must labour in order to survive. *Nirvāṇa-bhūmi* is the name of a place where one of the Jain *Tīrthankaras* attained enlightenment and liberation. *Īshat-prāgbhārā-bhūmi,* also called *siddhaloka* (world of the perfected), is the final resting place and heavenly abode, above all other heavenly realms, situated at the very pinnacle of the occupied universe *(loka-ākāsha),* where souls dwell for all eternity in the blissful experience of their own consciousness. *Īshat-prāgbhārā-bhūmi* means 'slightly curved world', indicating its supposed dome-like shape.

In Buddhism, a *bhūmi* is a stage of spiritual development. According to *Theravāda,* four *bhūmis* are to be attained in order to reach the status of an *ariya-puggala* (noble person).

In *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* (tantric Buddhism), the path of the *bodhisattva* is divided into ten *bhūmis* (stages), culminating in enlightenment. A *bodhisattva* is a *Mahāyāna* conception, referring to one who has vowed not to enter a *nirvāṇa* from which there is no return until all sentient beings have attained enlightenment. A number of varying descriptions are given of the ten *bhūmis.* Often the ten stages are linked to the development of the six *pāramitās* (perfections), to which a further four are added to make the ten stages. An extensive description of these stages is found the *Dashabhūmika Sūtra* ('*Sūtra* of the Ten Stages'), which appears as a chapter in the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra.*[1] The *Dashabhūmika Sūtra* expounds in great detail and verbosity the development of all good human qualities, followed by the higher mystic wisdom that results from meditation as the aspiring *bodhisattva* progresses through the ten *bhūmis.*

The *bhūmis* are sometimes described as *vihāras* ('dwellings'). The *Bodhisattva-bhūmi Sūtra* lists seven *bhūmis* and thirteen *vihāras,*[2] which overlap with each other. This *sūtra* also points out the correspondences between its system of thirteen *vihāras* and the ten *bhūmis* of the *Dashabhūmika Sūtra.* Although both describe a *bodhisattva*'s spiritual evolution towards enlightenment, the *Dashabhūmika Sūtra* charts this progress as steady acquisition of the ten *pāramitās* (perfections). The *Bodhisattva-bhūmi Sūtra,* on the other hand, bases its description on gradual realization of *nirnimitta bhāvanā* (cultivation of the Unconditioned), which culminates in entry to the *tathāgata-vihāra* (abode of the *buddhas*).

The Tibetan monk Gampopa (1079–1153) also provides a detailed description of the ten *bhūmis* in the *Jewel Ornament of Liberation.*[3] Summarizing some of the descriptions of the *bhūmis,* mostly from the Tibetan perspective, the ten *bhūmis* are:

1. *Pramuditā-bhūmi.* Great joy, extreme joy; joy at having overcome all previous difficulties. The *bodhisattva* sets out on his journey full of a certainty that stems from the realization that the true state of things is emptiness *(shūnyatā)* – that things lack any real or inherent existence of their own. This gives him great happiness, for he knows that this awareness will never fade. He focuses on fulfilling his vows and attempts to practise all the perfections, with an emphasis on the first *pāramitā,* which is generosity *(dāna).* He also brings other beings to the *Dharma* through the four means of attraction *(saṃgraha-vastu):* generosity *(dāna),* kind and loving words *(priya-vādita),* helpful deeds *(artha-kriyā),* and sympathy *(samānārtha).* Although it is the first *bodhisattva* stage, with significantly further to go, *pramuditā-bhūmi* is nonetheless regarded as an advanced spiritual stage in comparison to the

condition of worldly minded people. The *bodhisattva* has already developed an awareness and consciousness beyond that of an ordinary being. The Tibetan Buddhist teacher Khenpo Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche (*b.*1934) observes:

> One may wonder whether someone who has reached the *bodhisattva* levels is freed from all the veils of the mental poisons and hindrances to knowledge. This is not the case. At this point the veils are partly purified. This process of purification continues while one travels through the *bodhisattva* levels, in a degree corresponding to each level.... Having reached the first *bodhisattva* level, one is purified from the gross aspects of the veils of the mental poisons and hindrances to knowledge.
>
> *Khenpo Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, on Uttaratantra Sūtra, BNUS pp.320, 323*

He adds that although the innate *buddha*-nature within is always pure, from the outside there appears to be a gradual removal of impurities:

> When it is said that the primordial wisdom of *bodhisattvas* is free from the veils of the mental poisons and hindrances to knowledge, this does not mean that a *bodhisattva* is free from all these veils without any remainder. Utter purification from the veils is not achieved until the level of buddhahood is reached.
>
> *Khenpo Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, on Uttaratantra Sūtra, BNUS p.325*

2. *Vimalā-bhūmi.* Without *(vi)* taint *(mala),* stainless, pure; freedom from impurity in thought and deed, practising the *pāramitā* of moral discipline and good conduct *(shīla).* Khenpo Rinpoche says:

> On the second *bodhisattva* level, ethics reach their perfection. Through this attainment the conduct of a *bodhisattva* who dwells on this level has become utterly pure. Since there are no faults of behaviour whatsoever, the second *bhūmi* is called 'the stainless'.
>
> *Khenpo Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, on Uttaratantra Sūtra, BNUS p.397*

3. *Prabhākarī-bhūmi.* Refulgence, luminosity, illumination. The first stage of meditation, in which the *bodhisattva* deepens his understanding and awareness. The light of the *Dharma* radiates from him, his commitment deepens, and he focuses on developing the *pāramitā* of patience and forbearance *(kshānti).*

4. *Archishmatī-bhūmi.* Radiance, brilliance, blazing; burning or glowing wisdom. The illumination of the previous stage gains in intensity, and the radiant light burns away whatever stands in the way of enlightenment. With

effort and enthusiasm, he devotes himself to development of all the good qualities, the *pāramitā* of this stage being vigour or effort *(vīrya).*

5. *Sudurjayā-bhūmi.* Hard to conquer, difficult to train or overcome, mastery of what is most difficult. The *bodhisattva* focuses on his own spiritual development, at the same time helping others to do the same. The *pāramitā* of this stage is meditation and concentration *(dhyāna),* also called the *samādhi* (concentration) *pāramitā.* Learning to bring the mind under complete control by means of meditation is the most difficult task that any being can undertake. Khenpo Rinpoche says:

> Its name . . . can be explained in two ways. On one hand, it is difficult to purify the veils that obscure the nature of the mind at this point. On the other hand, it is difficult to incite the disciples' effort towards serious discipline and practice.
>
> *Khenpo Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, on Uttaratantra Sūtra, BNUS p.398*

6. *Abhimukhī-bhūmi.* Facing forward, directly manifest, direct presence; ascent above the duality of purity and impurity. The *bodhisattva* enters the "door of the teaching of profundity" and becomes the recipient of great wisdom and understanding *(prajñā)* concerning the true nature of things. Here he dwells in neither *saṃsāra* nor *nirvāṇa.* The *pāramitā* is that of wisdom *(prajñā).* He is now master of the six *pāramitās.* Khenpo Rinpoche says:

> The sixth *bodhisattva* level is called 'directly manifest' since a *bodhisattva* who dwells on this level has gained the ability of directly seeing the illusory nature of *saṃsāra. Saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* are seen to be one and the same. There is no longer the slightest difference between them. On the sixth *bodhisattva* level, discriminative wisdom reaches perfection.
>
> *Khenpo Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, on Uttaratantra Sūtra, BNUS p.398*

7. *Dūraṃgamā-bhūmi.* Gone afar, far-going; transcending self and going beyond all concepts used to understand the objects of perception and experience. Here the *bodhisattva* comes to understand the virtue of 'skilful means *(upāya-kaushalya)*' – the many methods and expedients by which he can truly teach and inspire others. The qualities of buddhahood become firmly established in him. Having reached the seventh stage, the *bodhisattva* is assured of never falling back. The first seven *bhūmis* are known as the 'impure *bhūmis*', because the *bodhisattva* is striving for perfection, but has not attained it. The last three *bhūmis* are called the 'pure *bhūmis*'.

8. *Achalā-bhūmi.* Immovable steadfastness; the attainment of calm imperturbability. The possibility of retrogression is now past, and the efforts of the

first seven stages come to fruition automatically in the remaining three stages. The *bodhisattva* develops the power to choose his own rebirth. Here, emphasis is on the virtue of aspiration *(praṇidhāna)* and the longing to proceed.

9. *Sādhumatī-bhūmi.* Good mind, excellent understanding. Attainment of the most excellent perceptive and discriminating wisdom, seeing the true nature of all things in an all-encompassing manner. The virtue emphasized at this stage is spiritual power *(bala).*

10. *Dharmamegha-bhūmi.* Cloud of *Dharma.* Attainment of full perfection and enlightenment, of becoming a fully enlightened *buddha.* The virtue here is primal wisdom *(jñāna)* concerning all things. Khenpo Rinpoche explains:

> *Bodhisattvas* who dwell on the tenth *bodhisattva* level are called 'those who have reached the last existence,' since the next step in the career of such a *bodhisattva* is the attainment of buddhahood. When it is said that these *bodhisattvas* are free from all thoughts and ideation, having eliminated these in the process of a complete transformation of state, this means that the ordinary consciousness has been transformed into primordial wisdom. Through this transformation, all concepts are also transformed and thereby relinquished.... A *bodhisattva* who dwells on the tenth *bodhisattva* level appears to the disciples as an ordinary being, but is of a different nature. His or her very nature is the accomplishment of the welfare of all sentient beings....
>
> The name of the tenth *bodhisattva* level is 'cloud of *Dharma*' since a *bodhisattva* who dwells on this level conveys the sacred *Dharma* to beings in a way that is spontaneous and free from any deliberate effort. This is similar to the sky in which rain clouds gather and release their abundant waters spontaneously and without effort onto the earth, where the rain provides for a good harvest. On the tenth *bodhisattva* level the perfection of primordial wisdom is achieved.
>
> *Khenpo Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, on Uttaratantra Shāstra, BNUS pp.356, 398–99*

The ten *bhūmis* are related to the five paths *(pañcha-mārga)* – a description of the entire journey to enlightenment that is prevalent in Sanskrit Buddhism, especially in the *Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma* texts of early Buddhism and in the *Yogāchāra* school of the *Mahāyāna* tradition. In this description, the first two paths are preliminary to entering the ten *bhūmis.*

First is the path of accumulation *(sambhāra-mārga),* in which the aspirant turns away from the world, develops a strong desire to overcome suffering, and entertains a deep yearning for spiritual enlightenment. This attitude is also known as *bodhichitta* (a mind turned towards enlightenment). These are the prerequisites that must be 'accumulated' when setting out on the path.

Second is the path of preparation *(prayoga-mārga),* in which the seeker begins the practice of meditation, and develops an intellectual or conceptual understanding of the four noble truths and of the emptiness *(shūnyatā)* of all phenomena.

Third is the path of seeing *(darshana-mārga),* which corresponds to the first *bhūmi.* Here the practitioner develops deep concentration in meditation and comes to realize the nature of *shūnyatā.*

Fourth is the path of meditation *(bhāvanā-mārga),* which encompasses the second to the seventh *bhūmis.* Here, meditation supersedes all else. Through progress in meditation, practitioners increase the depth of their wisdom or gnosis concerning the nature of Reality.

Fifth and last is the path of consummation or no more learning *(ashaiksha-mārga),* which corresponds to the three pure *bhūmis* in which enlightenment is attained and everything is understood.

The *Lankāvatāra Sūtra* has an interesting perspective on these ten *bhūmis.* The subject is introduced when the *bodhisattva-mahāsattva* Mahāmati asks the Buddha to describe the stages to enlightenment. The text follows the traditional exposition of Buddhist *sūtras,* in which the Buddha is reported as speaking, even though the text may have been written many centuries after the Buddha's death. The Buddha first explains that the inner path experienced by *bodhisattvas, shrāvakas* (hearers, disciples), and *pratyeka-buddhas* (those who attain enlightenment for themselves alone) has various stages. Although the text is far from clear, and there are several versions of it, the general import seems to be reasonably straightforward. The stages depict a steady expansion of consciousness and consequent understanding of the nature of Reality. According to Goddard's rearrangement of this *sūtra,* entering the first stage

> is like passing out of the glare of the shadows into a realm of 'no-shadows'; it is like passing out of the noise and tumult of the crowded city into the quietness of solitude. The *bodhisattva* feels within himself the awakening of a great heart of compassion, and he utters his ten original vows. . . . In the spirit of these vows, the *bodhisattva* gradually ascends the stages to the sixth stage.
>
> *Lankāvatāra Sūtra; cf. BBDG pp.147–48*

Attainment of the six *pāramitās* (perfections) then occupies the *bodhisattva* as far as the sixth stage. Entering the seventh stage, the *bodhisattva* – realizing that ego, individuality, separateness and multiplicity have no reality – perceives everything as undifferentiated, and "attains perfect tranquillity in every minute of his mental life". At the eighth stage, looking back, he can see that the stages from the first up to the sixth, which embrace everything within the "three worlds", are nothing more than "*chitta* (thought), *manas* (mind), and *mano-vijñāna* (mental knowledge)". Everything is then perceived

as *māyā* (illusion). The first seven stages are entirely "of the mind" where duality prevails. Even the eighth stage, which is said to be formless, is still touched by the mind. Moving onwards, the ninth stage has a reality distinct from that of the mind, and beyond that, in the tenth stage, there is complete enlightenment, utter oneness, and total non-differentiation.[4]

The eighth stage is thus a significant point in the 'journey'. When the *bodhisattva* reaches this stage, there is a "turning about in the deepest seat of consciousness":[5]

> Ever since beginningless time, the mind system has perceived multiplicities of forms and conditions and ideas that the thinking mind has divided up, and that the empirical mind (the mind associated with the senses) has experienced, and grasped, and clung to. From this has arisen a habitual energy which, by its accumulation, has created the illusions of existence and nonexistence, individuality and universality, and has thus perpetuated the dream state of false imagination. But now, to the *bodhisattvas* of the eighth stage, that life is past and is remembered as it truly was as a passing dream.
>
> *Lankāvatāra Sūtra; cf. BBDG p.152*

At this stage, too, the *bodhisattva* becomes aware that he has received a body consisting entirely of mindstuff *(manomaya-kāya).* While he remains in the physical body, he still retains his "old mind", which is needed to "serve the needs of the old body", but the "old body" is now completely "free from the dominion of the mortal mind":

> There has been an inconceivable transformation and death *(achintya-pariṇāma-chyuti)* by which the false imagination of a particularized individual personality has been transcended by a realization of his oneness with the universalized consciousness of *tathāgata*-hood, from which realization there is no turning back. With that realization, he finds himself amply endowed with all the *tathāgata*'s powers, mental faculties and self-mastery and, just as the good earth is the support of all beings in the world of desire *(kāma-dhātu),* so the *tathāgatas* become the support of all beings in the transcendental world of no form.
>
> *Lankāvatāra Sūtra; cf. BBDG p.153*

This same story, says the text, concerning "the abodes and stages of buddhahood . . . has been told, is told, and will be told by all the *buddhas*". It is a universal truth, transcending time. The final stage, it continues, "has neither bounds nor limits; it surpasses all the *buddha*-lands (heavens), and pervades the *akanishṭha* (realm of Buddhist deities) and the heavenly mansions of

tushita." "It is the highest station" of "self-realization and absolute purity.... Its rays of light ascend like a mass of fire." The text concludes by saying that all stages exist only within the utter oneness of the tenth stage. The highest Reality is one, and everything exists within it.[6]

In this ascent or evolution, there is a difference between the experience of the *bodhisattva* on the one hand, and of the *shrāvakas* and *pratyeka-buddhas* on the other. According to the writer of the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra,* who is putting forward the *Mahāyāna* viewpoint at the expense of *Theravāda,* the sixth stage marks a parting of the ways. The *shrāvakas* and *pratyeka-buddhas* become absorbed in the bliss of that stage, and take that as their *nirvāṇa;* but the *bodhisattvas,* with the help of the *buddhas,* resist the temptation of a lower *nirvāṇa,* and rise higher:

> All earnest disciples *(shrāvakas), pratyeka-buddhas* and *arhats* have ascended thus far (to the sixth stage) but, being enchanted by the bliss of the *samādhis* (absorptions) and not being supported by the power of the *buddhas,* they pass to their *nirvāṇa.* The same fate would befall the *bodhisattvas,* except for the sustaining power of the *buddhas,* by which they are enabled to refuse to enter *nirvāṇa* until all beings can enter *nirvāṇa* with them. The *tathāgatas* point out to them the virtues of buddhahood, which are beyond the conceptions of the intellectual mind, and they encourage and strengthen the *bodhisattvas* not to give in to the enchantment of the bliss of the *samādhis,* but to press on to further advancement along the stages. If the *bodhisattvas* had entered *nirvāṇa* at this stage – and they would have done so without the sustaining power of the *buddhas* – there would have been the cessation of all things, and the family of the *tathāgatas* would have become extinct.
>
> With the new strength that comes to them from the *buddhas* and with the more nearly perfect insight that is theirs by reason of their advance in self-realization of noble wisdom, they re-examine the nature of the mind system, the egolessness of personality, and the parts that grasping and attachment and the energy of habit play in the unfolding drama of life; they re-examine the illusions of ... logical analysis, and the various elements that bear upon enlightenment and self-realization and, in the thrill of their new powers of self-mastery, the *bodhisattvas* enter upon the seventh stage of 'gone afar *(dūraṃgamā)*'.
>
> *Lankāvatāra Sūtra; cf. BBDG pp.148–49*

So the *bodhisattvas* enjoy the peace and bliss of the seventh stage, which is beyond the stages of the six *pāramitās,* and which is essentially that of *nirvāṇa,* because they are no longer functioning in the realms of duality and separateness:

> Supported by the sustaining power of the *buddhas,* the *bodhisattvas* at this stage enter into the bliss of the *samādhi* of perfect tranquillity. Owing to their original vows, they are transported by emotions of love and compassion as they become aware of the part they are to perform in carrying out their vows for the emancipation of all beings. Thus they do not enter into *nirvāṇa,* although in truth they too are already in *nirvāṇa* because, in their emotions of love and compassion, there arises no sense of separateness; henceforth, for them, there is no longer any sense of separateness. Because of their transcendental understanding, only one conception is present – promotion of the realization of noble wisdom. This is called the *bodhisattvas' nirvāṇa,* the losing of oneself in the bliss of perfect self-yielding. This is the seventh stage, the stage of 'gone afar'.
>
> *Lankāvatāra Sūtra; cf. BBDG p.149*

There are varying descriptions of the final state attained by the *bodhisattva.* Some *Mahāyāna sūtras* maintain that a *bodhisattva* simply does not enter *nirvāṇa* until his task has been accomplished; others say he experiences a special form of *nirvāṇa (apratishṭhita nirvāṇa),* which implies an 'unlocalized' or non-specific kind of *nirvāṇa,* like that described in the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra.*

See also: **bhoga-bhūmi** (6.3), **bodhisattva** (7.1), **karma-bhūmi** (6.3), **loka** (4.1), **pañcha-mārga** (▸4), **triloka** (4.1).

1. *Dashabhūmika Sūtra, T10* 287; *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* 23–27, *T9* 278:542a5–78a3, *FOSC* (26) pp.698–811.
2. *Bodhisattva-bhūmi Sūtra, BSMC, Ms. Add. 1702* fol.120a*ff.*
3. Gampopa, *Jewel Ornament of Liberation* 19:108a–117b, *JOLG* pp.239–52, *JOLK* pp.263–77.
4. *Lankāvatāra Sūtra* 4:211–16; *cf. LSMT* pp.182–86.
5. *Lankāvatāra Sūtra; cf. BBDG* p.172.
6. *Lankāvatāra Sūtra* 4:215–16; *cf. LSMT* p.186.

bhūta-koṭi (S), **yang dag pa'i mtha'** (T), **shíjì** (C), **jissai** (J) *Lit.* limit *(koṭi, mtha')* of the existing *(bhūta);* the summit, boundary or highest point of what is, the peak of existence, the highest reality *(yang dag pa, shíjì, jissai);* in *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, the highest Truth or Reality, the limit of Reality, the Absolute, the apex of Truth; the highest state, *nirvāṇa.*

Bhūta-koṭi is one of several terms used more or less synonymously for the highest Reality, including *Dharmatā* (nature of Reality), *Shūnyatā* (emptiness), *Tattva* (Thatness, Thusness), *Tathatā* (Things as they are, Suchness, Thusness), true Suchness *(bhūta-Tathatā),* and *Yathābhūta* (Things as they

are). *Bhūta-koṭi,* however, like *nirvāṇa* often refers more to the state of being that experiences the highest Reality than to the Reality itself.[1] Yet, since the highest Reality is characterized by the absence of any distinction between the knower, the knowing and the thing known, the difference between Reality and experience can only be conceptual. According to the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra,* "the limit of Reality *(bhūta-koṭi)* can only be realized within oneself."[2]

1. See *e.g.* Nāgārjuna, *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Shāstra* 49:2, *T25* 1509:297b–99a, *TVW5* pp.1804–16.
2. *Lankāvatāra Sūtra* 2:34, *LSBN* p.88, *LSMT* p.78.

bīdārī (P) *Lit.* wakefulness, waking; wakefulness to this world; or wakefulness to spiritual life, wakefulness to the inner reality, wakefulness to the spiritual worlds; also called *ḥālat al-ṣaḥw* (state of wakefulness, state of sobriety). Sufis have likened living in this world, and being awake only through the material senses, to being asleep; to be truly wakeful is to be conscious of the inner worlds. The term is used in both contexts. In the *Maśnavī,* Rūmī speaks of "wakefulness" to this world:

> Whosoever is awake (to the material world)
> is the more asleep (to the spiritual world);
> His wakefulness *(bīdārī)* is worse than his sleep.
> When our soul is not awake to God,
> wakefulness *(bīdārī)* is like closing our doors (to God).
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī I:409–10, MJR2 p.25*

On the other hand, Ḥāfiẓ speaks of the inner, spiritual wakefulness when a heightened and yearning consciousness seeks the beloved in nightly meditation. He addresses the inner beloved:

> O intoxicated eye of the beloved, sleep not. . . .
> For the sigh of this wakeful one *(āh-i bīdār)*
> seeks You in all directions.
>
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.246, DIH p.395; cf. DHWC (552:3) p.901*

Mystics have enjoyed the paradox of the contrary meanings of wakefulness. Thus, in a saying attributed to Muḥammad, the Prophet indicates that for a mystic, when the body sleeps, the heart or inner consciousness may still be awake. He says, "My eyes sleep while my heart does not."[1]

See also: **ṣaḥw**.

1. *Ḥadīth,* in *Mashrab al-Arwāḥ* 13:22, *MARB* p.233, in *SSE5* p.162.

bilās (H/Pu) See **vilāsa**.

bittul, **bittul ha-yesh** (He) *Lit.* negation, self-abnegation; transcendence *(bittul)* of being *(ha-yesh);* used in Hasidism, especially by the *Ḥabad* mystics, to describe a state of self-denial and annihilation of the individual will, culminating in union with the Divine.

Bittul arises from awareness that human life is insignificant and temporary, and therefore illusory in comparison to the vastness and permanence of the Divine. The created realm, where the sense of an individual self holds sway, is neither real nor true. *Bittul* requires a practitioner to relinquish this individual human perspective of being something separate from the Divinity. *Ḥabad* mystics express great longing and yearning for the separate 'self' to become annihilated in the divine Reality. Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz writes that in Hasidic thought *bittul* refers to the process by which "a person's sense of his independent existence is subsumed within and elevated to an awareness of a greater, more inclusive existence – the existence of God."[1]

The *ḥasidim* believe that there are two levels of *bittul* – the lower *bittul ha-yesh* (nullification of substance, surrender of corporeality) and the higher *bittul ha-mezi´ut* (nullification of existence).

At the lower level of *bittul ha-yesh,* in the realms of *briah* (causal), *yeẓirah* (astral) and *'assiyah* (physical), the individual consciously attempts to submit to the divine will. In a kind of intellectual or emotional submission, he consciously tries to nullify the sense of self.

At the higher level of *bittul ha-meẓi´ut,* a soul experiences the flow of *Ḥokhmah,* the *sefirah* (emanation) of divine wisdom within the realm of *aẓilut* – the purely spiritual realm of emanation. At this level, the submission is mystical. Here, the soul goes beyond its individual existence and merges in the *ayin* (nothingness, the *Aur Ayn-Sof,* the primal light of the divine Source).

All levels of *bittul* involve the surrender of the individual self to the divine will. Although the state of total self-annihilation can only be achieved by transcending the individual self and merging into the divine Reality through inner worship, the *Ḥabad* also incorporated the notion of *bittul* into a highly structured form of worship known as *'avodah be-bittul* (worship through negation, worship in self-annihilation), which involves at least nine subtly different stages leading to annihilation of individual identity and total re-inclusion of the soul in the divine Source. At that stage, the only reality is God – nothing else is real.

Rachel Elior, who has highlighted many aspects of *Ḥabad* teachings, explains:

> Self-annihilation is viewed as a general foundation of being or a law of nature, and its significance is that within every creature and every created reality there is the potential for absorption back into their source. Annihilation is … rather a divine process, permeating all of existence. …

> According to this view, man's presence in the world is for the purpose of self-nullification: the source of his soul is divine, garbed in a corporeal existence so that, as he raises himself up to its source, his bestial soul will be transformed and raise up his corporeal existence with it, renewing the unity between the different countenances (aspects) of the Divinity. In annihilating his separate existence, man also annihilates the apparent division within existence and expresses the overall unity through his own being. . . .
>
> According to the *Ḥabad* view, reality only seems to be separate from the Divinity, but in truth it is profoundly unified within it, and the purpose of annihilation is to understand its true status despite its manifest contrary. . . . Mystic contemplation transforms apparent plurality into a divine unity that fills all things.
>
> *Rachel Elior, Paradoxical Ascent to God, PAGH p.146*

As Rabbi Aharon Halevi Horowitz of Staroselye (1766–1828) writes in the collection of his teachings known as *ʿAvodat ha-Levi:*

> The main point of achieving self-annihilation is that a person should truly become as naught, that is, that he should not know or feel any essence within himself. . . . For his essence is of no significance to him at all, and he actually becomes a vessel prepared for the acceptance of the actual revelation of His blessed substance.
>
> *Aharon Halevi Horowitz, ʿAvodat ha-Levi 1, ALAH fol.58b, in PAGH pp.145–46*

Rabbi Aharon taught that the process of nullification of the individual is inherent in the original divine purpose of creation. Rachel Elior continues:

> In *Ḥabad* doctrine, the purpose of creation is conceived as the fulfilment of Divinity's will to produce a being separate from Itself, a non-divine reality, which, in fact, has only apparent being. The purpose of that step is the manifestation of divine wholeness in the aspects most contrary to its essence: in matter, in *kelipa* (evil) and in the world of separate entities; for an absolute expression of the Divinity is possible only in the paradoxical form of its presence within the realm most contrary to its own true essence. However, fulfilment of the divine will entails the annihilation of that separate entity and the achievement of awareness that it is merely illusory and null and void at its source.
>
> *Rachel Elior, Paradoxical Ascent to God, PAGH pp.149–50*

The use of the term *bittul* in a mystical context probably derives from the halakhic (legal) concept that a small substance, when diluted in a greater, loses its individual characteristics and becomes part of the greater. This principle

is called *bittul* (nullification) and is used as a benchmark for determining whether small items of an animal-derived substance, such as rennet, should be regarded as an animal substance or whether, when diluted to a certain extent, it takes on the characteristics of the substance into which it has been mixed.

See also: **ayin**, **Yesh** (3.1), **yiḥud**.

1. Adin Steinsaltz, *Learning from the Tanya, LTAS* p.300.

blessedness (Gk. *makaria, makariotēs*) Being blessed with divine grace; especially, the supreme bliss and beatitude of eternity; divine blessedness, eternal blessedness, the blessedness of heaven, beatitude, divine bliss; the state of divine perfection; in Christianity, the state enjoyed in the afterlife, of which spiritual experiences in this life are regarded as a foretaste; also, the state of the soul before the 'fall'.

The essential blessedness of the soul in heaven was an integral part of Greek mystical philosophy. According to Orphism, the soul is judged after death according to its deeds. If a person has lived a good life, the soul is rewarded with a stay in the meadows of the blessed, the Elysian Fields (*i.e.* heaven). Socratēs thus speaks of the blessedness of souls who dwell in the "upper earth",[1] as contrasted with those who live 'below', in *Hadēs.*

Plotinus interprets the feasts of the gods as a metaphor for the blessedness of the soul:

> The banqueting of the gods means no more than that they have their being in that vital blessedness *(makariotēs).*
>
> *Plotinus, Enneads 3:5.10, PEC p.106*

Blessedness, he says, is a state of sublime, essential being:

> Those whose nature is all blessedness *(makarios)* have no more to do than to repose in themselves and be their being.
>
> *Plotinus, Enneads 3:2.1, PEC p.83*

Philo Judaeus says that blessedness is the lot of those who truly understand that God is one[2] and live virtuous lives,[3] while the unknown gnostic who wrote the Nag Hammadi text *Allogenēs,* speaks of hearing an inner, enlightening "Blessedness" that brought with it a consciousness of his own true nature:

> There was within me a stillness of silence *(sigē)*
> and I heard the Blessedness *(Makarios)*
> whereby I knew my real self.
>
> *Allogenēs 60; cf. NHS28 pp.222–23*

In Christianity – according to the mystical philosophy of the unknown Syrian monk (*c.*500) who wrote the treatises pseudo-epigraphically attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite – the "divine Blessedness" is the divine "Source" Itself:

> The divine Blessedness *(to Makarion)* is … full of invisible light, perfect, lacking no perfection; itself purifying, illuminating and perfecting; or rather being purification, illumination and perfection itself; the self-perfect Source and Cause of all, beyond purification, beyond light,… transcending every holy thing.
>
> *Pseudo-Dionysius, Celestial Hierarchy 3:2; cf. in OCM p.170, WDA2 p.15*

Hence, the blessedness of the soul – indeed its very existence – arises from the divine "Pre-existent" – the source and cause of "all eternity and time and of anything that has any kind of being", and from which "all things and all the ages derive their existence":[4]

> Human souls and all other beings … have their being and their blessedness *(to eu einai)* – they exist and are blessed – because they have their being and their blessedness *(to eu einai)* from the Pre-existent. For in It are both being and blessedness *(eu onta):* from It, they have their beginning; in It, they are sustained; and to It, is their final goal.
>
> *Pseudo-Dionysius, Divine Names 5:8; cf. DNMT p.139, WDA1 pp.79–80*

Many other Christian mystics have spoken of this state. Referring to the Christian creed that "Jesus Christ is both God and man", Julian of Norwich maintains that Jesus himself is "supreme blessedness":

> Because he is God, he is supreme blessedness, and never has been nor ever shall be other. His eternal blessedness can neither be increased nor diminished.
>
> *Julian of Norwich, Revelations of Divine Love 31, RDL p.108*

It is by grace and mercy, she says, that this blessedness is given to the soul as a part of its salvation.[5]

Throughout his works, Jan van Ruysbroek refers to the eternal blessedness of the soul with God:

> Through Christ we shall all be taken up into God and be one in Him and one with Him in fruition and eternal blessedness.
>
> *Jan van Ruysbroek, Seven Steps 5; cf. SSL p.55*

This state of blessedness experienced by the soul comes about

> when, above all conception and knowledge, we find in ourselves a certain infinite or abyssal unknowing; when, transcending every name that has been given to God or to any created thing, we expire into the eternal Namelessness, wherein we are lost; when, beyond any practice of virtue, we contemplate and find within ourself an eternal repose in which no man can work and, above all blessed spirits, a blessedness without measure, in which we are all one – that same One which is that Blessedness itself in Its Essence; and when at last we contemplate all blessed spirits as in essence drowned and melted and lost in the supersubstantial Essence, in a pathless unknown darkness.
>
> *Jan van Ruysbroek, Seven Steps 7; cf. SSL p.57*

As he summarizes elsewhere:

> There, we are in restful bliss with God, above our created essence, far beyond and outside our spirit, in our supernatural blessedness, in the fathomless abyss that is the Being of God.
>
> *Jan van Ruysbroek, Book of the Twelve Beguines 14:2; cf. BTB p.100*

> So great is the mutual joy and delight between God and His beloved spirits, that they are rapt out of themselves and melt and flow to become one spirit with God in fruition, being drawn eternally into the abyssal blessedness of His essence.
>
> *Jan van Ruysbroek, Seven Steps 7, SSL p.58*

> In this love, we shall burn and be burnt up without end, throughout eternity; for herein lies the blessedness of all spirits.
>
> *Jan van Ruysbroek, Sparkling Stone 3, SSJR p.186*

Even so, in accordance with Christian doctrine, he adds:

> For we cannot wholly become God and lose our created being; this is impossible. Were we, however, to remain wholly in ourselves, sundered from God, we would be miserable and unblest. And therefore we should feel ourselves living wholly in God and wholly in ourselves; and between these two feelings we should find nothing else but the grace of God and the exercise of our love.
>
> *Jan van Ruysbroek, Sparkling Stone 9; cf. SSJR pp.205–6*

> The indrawing touch of God demands of us, that we should be one with God, and go forth from ourselves, and die into blessedness, that is, into the eternal love that embraces the Father and the Son in one fruition.
>
> *Jan van Ruysbroek, Sparkling Stone 12; cf. SSJR pp.217–18*

> This is an unfathomable abyss wherein man must die to himself in blessedness.
>
> *Jan van Ruysbroek, Sparkling Stone 13, SSJR p.220*

Despite the descriptions of spiritual consciousness given by mystics, some people question whether even a foretaste of eternal blessedness is attainable while the soul remains in the body. The *Theologia Germanica* affirms the possibility, but adds that to experience it, the soul must become completely detached from the body and material cares:

> It has been asked whether it is possible for the soul, while it is still in the body, to reach so high as to cast a glance into eternity, and receive a foretaste of eternal life and eternal blessedness. This possibility is commonly denied, and is truly so, in a sense. For indeed it cannot happen so long as the soul pays attention to the body, and the things that minister and appertain thereto, and to time and the creature, and is disturbed and troubled and distracted thereby. For if the soul shall rise to such a state, she must be quite pure, wholly stripped and bare of all images, and be entirely separate from all creatures, and above all from herself.
>
> *Theologia Germanica 8; cf. TG p.45*

Or as Angelus Silesius summarizes:

> A man who is abandoned to God in all his ways
> he may already now to blessedness be raised.
> *Angelus Silesius, Cherubinic Wanderer 4:39, CW p.89*

See also: **beatitude**, **bliss**.

1. Plato, *Phaedo* 111b–c, *DP1* p.470.
2. Philo Judaeus, *On the Creation of the World* 61, *PCW1* pp.136–37.
3. Philo Judaeus, *Worse Attacks the Better* 32, *PCW2* pp.282–83.
4. Pseudo-Dionysius, *Divine Names* 5:5; *cf. DNMT* p.136.
5. Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love* 59, *RDL* p.167.

bliss Spiritual happiness, delight, or felicity; rapture; the state of being blessed; the ecstatic joy of inner contact with the Divine; the peace and happiness of heaven; the endless joy of eternity, commonly promised to the faithful by many traditions, including Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Manichaeism, Mandaeism, gnosticism, the mysteries

of ancient Greece, and so on; the condition ascribed by many traditions to angels and heavenly beings; often linked to the experience of divine love and devotion, since God is love, and love is His very nature; mentioned almost invariably by mystics of all traditions as a feature of their spiritual experiences; generally regarded as the grace of God, since it is divine in nature, is experienced spontaneously, and cannot be turned on at will; a state that can be encouraged by spiritual practice or interior prayer.

Since such bliss is by its very nature inexpressible, most mystical writers speak of it, often ecstatically, but make little or no attempt to describe it. "Supreme bliss" is simply the nature of God:

> God is supreme bliss and infinite goodness, and immeasurably transcends everything that mankind can merit, so that He cannot be won by any man's own efforts, like some material reward. God is free, and gives Himself to whom He wills and when He wills, and not for any particular achievement or at any particular time, even though a person may do his utmost, and would do even more if he could.
>
> *Walter Hilton, Ladder of Perfection 2:20, LPH p.152*

It is all a matter of divine love:

> This divine love may be possessed incompletely in this life by a pure soul through the contemplation of God, but it is perfected in the bliss of heaven by a clear vision of the Godhead, for then all the aspirations of the soul will be entirely godward and spiritual.
>
> *Walter Hilton, Ladder of Perfection 2:35, LPH p.208*

One of the few who have described their experiences in detail is Californian, Nancy Mayorga. In her spiritual diary, she writes of how, in 1947, she started practising the form of *yoga* described in Patañjali's *Yoga Aphorisms:*

> This (book) turned out to be a series of practical instructions. I set about, simply and unquestioningly, to follow them. I sat cross-legged, spine straight, eyes closed, determined to make my mind a still lake, as he had instructed. When the mind was quite still, I concentrated my whole attention, with all the strength of my being upon an imaginary point of light at the top of my head. Patañjali says, "The *yogī*'s mind, thus meditating, becomes unobstructed from the atomic to the infinite."[1] So it seemed. I was at once grabbed, swept upward, completely out of myself, farther than I could have imagined in my life, beyond space, beyond time, into an unlocated, timeless, inexpressible bliss.

> Afterwards I sat, head bent, pulses throbbing, filled with astonishment at the intense exquisiteness of that moment just past. I said to myself, wonderingly, "So that's what *yoga* is!" And, in fact, that is what *yoga* is all about – and meditation, and contemplation, and mysticism. In a split second, no doubt about it, I had revealed to me the common denominator of all religions.
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM pp.1–2*

She goes on to describe further experiences of an ever-deepening joy and bliss that for the remaining thirty-five years of her life became her frequent – though not constant – companions (sometimes she experienced long periods, even as much as eighteen months, of spiritual dryness). Her spiritual master was a disciple of Shri Ramakrishna, Swami Prabhavananda, whom she met early on in her spiritual life. Her descriptions need no introductions:

> An inner life at this stage, after six years of intense and honest struggle, is something like this – there will be three or four days, or a week, when God and rapture are immediately available. All you have to do is hold thought steady for an instant and relax any physical or mental tensions that might serve as obstructions, and the current of bliss surges through you and spreads out like a delicious fire to the very smallest capillary. Your mind, your spirit, stands spellbound with awe and gratitude. And these moments are not always calculated. They sometimes sweep upon you unexpectedly in the midst of some activity, in the oddest places, between the aisles at the market, setting the table for dinner, even at the wheel of the car. When it happens in traffic, it has the by-product of making you feel completely safe, untouchable.
>
> But then there will come a period when, after being caught up and held by joy, you feel as though the same hand threw you down pitilessly for some ruthless, unavoidable purpose. No physical pain of being hurled to the ground can compare with the mental anguish of being deprived of a bliss that you thought was yours now to keep. No frustration can equal the frustration of those moments set aside for contemplation, now so empty of any results of any kind. If it is not deliberately a part of a plan to humble you, nevertheless it serves that purpose. You search and wonder and think what you did wrong to turn off the path that was so clear and sure a few days ago. And you pray. You who have never really prayed before, and pray with all humility. And then wait. There's nothing else to do.
>
> Then this strange phenomenon – sometimes you get up from the most frustrating session of silence to find joy welling up in you as soon

> as you start some activity. You sit down for meditation – nothing. You get up to work and there it is again, like someone playing a joke on you.
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM pp.12–13*

> All day I am overtaken by sudden surges of ecstatic joy. In between them, my heart is full of love, my throat full of laughter. When I go to bed, I am sometimes overwhelmed with bliss. I awake every morning in ecstasy.... Sometimes I can't eat at all for the bliss that seizes me.
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM p.32*

> With the utmost ease and lack of complications, I am able to open my heart and take in wave after wave of joy, light, love. I am sure now that some one of these mornings, with very little effort on my part, I shall be drawn in gently and allowed to lose myself in the vast ocean of bliss that is God.... And it is so easy. I simply open my soul.
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM p.20*

> Almost uninterrupted, day and night, day in and day out, that bliss courses through me. I never had really believed it could be achieved, not by me anyway. But it is here, it is here, ever since God took my heart. There He lives, filling it completely. Oh, how is it possible that there should be such joy? Joy that never grows less, never palls, but increases and expands.
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM p.51*

> This morning I awoke at three-thirty, wrapped around and filled with such an exquisite and tender bliss that I lay motionless, breathless with astonishment. Oh, whom can I tell? Oh, who would believe? Who knows but God the amount and the depth and the quality of the joy He can bestow on those who love Him?
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM p.68*

> As soon as the bliss seizes you, the ego enters – to enjoy, to prolong. And as soon as the ego enters, the supreme moment is gone. The trick is to destroy, to forget, to lose the ego in that bliss.
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM p.34*

Elsewhere in her diary, she speaks of "bliss unspeakable", "living in bliss", "that blessed, comforting bliss", "that all-pervading, still, blissful light", being "filled with bliss", "being allowed to lose myself in the vast ocean of bliss that is God",[2] and many more such expressions. At one place, she describes a frequent experience of God that is "so strong, so deep, that it

actually immobilizes me for an instant with bliss". She also writes, "The stuff of the universe is consciousness, and the nature of consciousness is bliss," and "God is a beginningless, bottomless spring of bliss."[3] Although presuming that she "must have worked at it in many previous lives",[4] she takes no personal credit for her experiences. "This was none of my doing. This was all His."[5] It was all a divine gift:

> An interesting thing about this bliss is that always I feel as if it is a gift, nothing that I myself have achieved. My achievement consists in having made myself ready to receive it.
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM p.65*

See also: **ānanda**, **ecstasy**, **joy**, **rapture**.

1. Patañjali, *Yoga Sūtras* 1:40, *CWSV1* p.228.
2. Nancy Mayorga, *Hunger of the Soul, HSDM* pp.34, 35, 99, 106, 107, 20.
3. Nancy Mayorga, *Hunger of the Soul, HSDM* pp.18, 106, 120.
4. Nancy Mayorga, *Hunger of the Soul, HSDM* p.2.
5. Nancy Mayorga, *Hunger of the Soul, HSDM* p.51.

bliss, **delight**, **gladness**, **happiness**, **joy**, **rejoicing (in Judaism)** (He. *osher, gila, simḥa, ta'anug*) Spiritual happiness, delight, or felicity; rapture; the state of being blessed; the peace and happiness of heaven; the ecstatic joy of inner contact with the Divine; a condition resulting from experience of the love and beauty of the heavenly realms; the bliss of the soul, often described in the Bible. The Hebrew terms *osher, gila,* and *simḥa* are similar in meaning.

Osher is generally translated as 'happiness', 'blessing' or 'felicity', and may be related to the name of an ancient Canaanite god – either *Asherah* (a fertility goddess) or *Ashur,* the chief Assyrian deity. It is also related to the masculine Hebrew name Asher, who was the second son of the patriarch Jacob and gave his name to one of the twelve tribes of Israel.

In certain contexts, *osher* has a mystical meaning. In the *Zohar,* the medieval book of Jewish mysticism, it refers to one of the spiritual regions known as the 'place of the bliss *(osher)* of the righteous' and the 'place of celestial bliss *(osher)*'. Describing the spiritual ascent of the rabbis to this realm of celestial bliss, the young Rabbi Ḥiyya speaks of the spiritual light and power of Rabbi Simeon ben Yoḥai:

> Rabbi Ḥiyya opened his mouth and said: "The eye has seen what I have never seen; what has come to pass was beyond my imagining. It is good to die in the flaming fire of pure gold, in a place where the sparks fly out on every side, each spark ascending to the three

> hundred and seventy chariots, and each chariot dividing into myriads upon myriads, until they come to the Ancient of Days (God) who sits on the throne, and the throne shudders before Him into two hundred and sixty worlds, until it (*i.e.* the spark, which is the teaching of Rabbi Simeon ben Yoḥai) comes to the place of the bliss *(osher)* of the righteous, until it is heard throughout all the firmaments, and all the upper and lower regions, all at the same time, are astounded and say: 'This is Rabbi Simeon ben Yoḥai, who shatters all things. Who can stand before him? This is Rabbi Simeon ben Yoḥai, whose voice, when he opens his mouth and begins to study *Torah,* is heeded by all the thrones, all the firmaments, and all the chariots; and all of these, who praise their master, neither open nor close (their mouths) – all of them are silent, until in all the firmaments, above and below, no sound is heard.'
>
> "When Rabbi Simeon completes his study of the *Torah,* who has seen the songs, who has seen the joy *(simḥa)* of those who praise their master? Who has seen the voices that travel through all the firmaments? They all come on account of Rabbi Simeon, and they bow and prostrate themselves before their master, exuding the odours of the spices of Eden as far as the Ancient of Days, and all this on account of Rabbi Simeon."
>
> *Zohar 2:14a–b, Midrash ha-Neʿelam, WZ1 p.131*

Elsewhere, the *Zohar* speaks of the promise of heavenly joys to come, when it says: "The soul of the righteous is to bathe in the joy of celestial bliss *(osher elyon).*"[1]

In the Bible, *osher* takes other forms. As *ashrei* (happy, blissful, blessed), it appears in a prayer from the Jewish liturgy, generally referred to as the *Ashrei* and recited three times daily. The first two verses of the prayer are taken from psalms 84 and 144.[2] In the commonly used translation, the prayer begins: "Happy *(ashrei)* are they who dwell in Your house; they will praise You always!"

Biblical psalms can be interpreted in several ways. In this instance, from a mystical perspective, they indicate the spiritual bliss of those who "dwell" in the Lord's house – who experience God within themselves. The happiness of souls that live with God is naturally spiritual and blissful; such souls remain in bliss because they know God. Understood in this way, the prayer reads:

> Blissful *(ashrei)* are they who dwell in Your house:
> they will praise You forever.
> Blissful *(ashrei)* is the people that is thus blessed:
> blissful *(ashrei)* the people whose God is the Lord.
>
> *Ashrei Prayer, PB p.75*

There are other passages of a similar nature:

> Blissful *(ashrei)* is the man whom You choose, and bring near,
> that he may dwell in Your courts;
> We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Your house,
> of Your holy temple.
>
> *Psalms 65:5; cf. JCL*

In other psalms, different terms for bliss and joy are used. Be joyful in the service of the Divine, counsels the psalmist, and keep Him always in mind:

> Serve the Lord with joy *(simḥa):*
> come before His presence with a song.
>
> *Psalms 100:2; cf. KB*

> Be joyous *(simḥa)* in the Lord,
> and rejoice *(gilu),* O righteous ones,
> and sing out all those who are of upright heart.
>
> *Psalms 32:11; cf. KB*

> I have set the Lord always before me:
> surely He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.
> Therefore my heart is glad *(simḥa)* and my glory rejoices *(gila).*
>
> *Psalms 16:8–9, KB*

Although many Jewish mystics have been ascetics and have taken a dark view of life in this world, there have also been those who have expressed their joy at the experience of the Divine. In the thirteenth century, Abraham Abulafia taught a meditational practice of combining letters and names to induce a state of deep concentration. These practices involved deconstructing and reconstructing various words, angelic and divine names, and sentences from the Bible and prayers, and conjugating them, repeating them for hours on end. In his book *Ḥayyei ha-ʿOlam ha-Ba* ('Life of the World to Come'), he writes that the combination of letters and names creates a kind of internal music in the meditator. The melodies vibrate within and bring joy to his heart:

> I will now explain to you how the method of *ẓeruf* (smelting, letter combination) proceeds. You must realize that letter combination acts in a manner similar to listening with the ears. The ear hears sounds and the sounds merge, according to the form of the melody or the pronunciation. I will offer you an illustration. A violin and a harp join in playing, and the ear hears, with sensations of love, variations in their harmonious playing. The strings touched with the right hand

> or the left hand vibrate, and the experience is sweet to the ears, and from the ears the sound travels to the heart and from the heart to the spleen (understood as the seat of emotion). The joy *(simḥa)* is renewed through the pleasure of the changing melodies, and it is impossible to renew it except through the process of combinations of sounds.
>
> The combination of letters proceeds similarly. One touches the first string, representing the first letter, and the right hand passes to the others, to second, third, fourth or fifth strings, and from the fifth it proceeds to the others. In this process of permutations, new melodies emerge and vibrate to the ears, and then touch the heart. This is how the technique of letter combination operates.... And the secrets which are disclosed in the vibrations rejoice the heart, for the heart then knows its God and experiences additional delight. This is alluded to in the verse: "The *Torah* of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul."[3] When it is perfect, it restores the soul.
>
> *Abraham Abulafia, Ḥayyei ha-ʿOlam ha-Ba, HOBA; cf. in JMT pp.104–5*

Abulafia wrote detailed instructions to his disciples, in which he mentions the great joy they will experience when the soul separates from the body:

> And be aware that the stronger the spiritual influx (flow of the divine power) will become in you, your outer and inner organs will weaken, and your whole body will be agitated with a mighty agitation to a point where you will think you are going to die at that time, for your soul will separate from your body out of great joy *(simḥa)* in having comprehended what you have comprehended.
>
> *Abraham Abulafia, Ḥayyei ha-ʿOlam ha-Ba, HOBA p.210ff.; cf. in JMT pp.100–1*

Three centuries later, Rabbi Isaac Luria (1534–1572) of Safed in northern Israel again taught that the ideal was to worship God with joy. He emphasized the importance of a happy disposition, and believed that sadness and melancholia would take the individual away from God and make mystical inspiration impossible. His words were recorded by his close disciple, Ḥayyim Vital:

> Melancholia is, by itself, an exceedingly unpleasant quality of personality, particularly in the case of an individual whose intention is to acquire esoteric knowledge and experience the holy spirit. There is nothing which impedes mystical inspiration – even for someone who is otherwise worthy of it – as much as the quality of sadness.
>
> *Rabbi Isaac Luria, in Shaʿar Ruaḥ ha-Kodesh, SRKV, in SSRF p.65*

Luria also maintained that obedience to and performance of the biblical commandments (the *miẓvot*) must be done in joyfulness. Ḥayyim Vital writes

that, according to his master, the degree of supernal light *(aur elyon)* and the inspiration of the holy spirit *(ruaḥ ha-kodesh)* evoked by performance of the *miẓvot* are in direct proportion to one's degree of joyfulness *(simḥa).*[4]

Rabbi Judah Loew of Prague (c.1520–1609) gives an interesting explanation of why it is necessary to serve God in joy *(simḥa)* and happiness. He says that when a man is joyful, his soul *(nefesh)* is complete and whole *(beshleimut).* Only when he observes a *miẓvah* (religious obligation or commandment) in happiness is his joy whole or complete in a spiritual sense. Otherwise, it is merely a physical act, and cannot be regarded as complete. God Himself is whole, complete, and transcendent; therefore, He will only reveal Himself to the individual whose joy is whole and whose bliss is transcendent, arising from acting according to His will.[5]

In Hasidism, the spiritual movement that arose in Eastern Europe during the mid-eighteenth century, it was considered a divine imperative to worship with joy and to live a life of happiness and bliss in God. Hasidism generally rejected the ascetic emphasis of the kabbalists and appealed to the heart, and there are many accounts of the *ḥasidim* singing and dancing with their *rebbes* (masters), celebrating their joy. The Baʿal Shem Tov (1698–1760), also known as the Besht, the first of the Hasidic masters, taught that "the primary purpose of prayer was the 'delight *(taʿanug)*' it produced; that is, the private experience and spiritual ascent that the person praying undergoes, the climax of which is mystical ecstasy."[6]

Yaʿakov Yosef of Polnoy quotes his master, the Baʿal Shem Tov:

> The reward of a *miẓvah* is a *miẓvah,* as a man has no greater reward than the delight *(taʿanug)* he feels from the *miẓvah* itself when he performs it with joy *(simḥa).*... The chief virtue is to take a greater delight *(taʿanug)* in the worship of the Lord than in all other pleasures.
>
> *Yaʿakov Yosef, Keter Shem Tov 129, 88, KSTY fol.16b, 17a, 12b, in BMME pp.130–31*

A story is told about the Baʿal Shem Tov and his disciples, which concerns their dancing and singing in order to attain the joy of *devekut* (cleaving, intense devotion to God):

> Once the Baʿal Shem Tov sang and danced with his disciples for hours on *Shabbat* (Sabbath) evening after the meal. When he sat down to rest for a while, his disciples surrounded him, and he said, "By means of music you can attain joy and *devekut* with the Infinite One, blessed be He. The holy *Zohar* says that there are heavenly palaces whose gates are only opened by song. But you have to sing before God, and let the *Shekhinah* (divine presence) sing through you. When you dance, dance before God. I tell you, the dances of a Jew are prayers, and the

purpose of dancing is to lift up the holy sparks. In a sacred dance, the lower rung of spirituality is raised up to the higher. . . ."

One of his disciples said, "Master, some of your opponents criticize us for what they say is our excessive joy and our dancing." The Besht replied, "I'll answer them with a parable. Once, a talented fiddler stood in the street playing in an ecstasy of passion. Many people gathered to listen and were so enchanted by his music that they began to dance, lost to the world. A deaf man happened to pass by and, since he couldn't hear the ravishing music, was utterly astonished by the bizarre scene before his eyes. Not knowing why the people were dancing, he was certain they were actually madmen. The truth is that if he heard the music and experienced the tremendous joy and ecstasy, he would have danced with them! My disciples," said the Besht, "hear and see the song that emanates from each and every thing that God, blessed be He, has created. If so, how can they keep from dancing?"

Gazing at his loyal disciples surrounding him, all fastened on his every word, he continued, "I tell you, a Jew should always be joyful. He mustn't allow any opening for the evil inclination *(yeẓer ha-ra)* of sadness. Pious people consider sadness a sin according to the *Torah;* and joy – the joy that comes from seeing that everything is good – they consider a commandment of the *Torah.* The *Torah* says about the Holy One, blessed be He: 'There is joy in His place.'[7] How can you not be happy, if you know that you're in God's world and that He's always near? You're like a king's son – and there's always joy in your father's palace. If you understand this and truly believe it, how can you experience any suffering? I tell you, the deepest truth is that there is no bad or evil, no sorrow or sadness, and no death. There's only joy. But not everyone can hear or understand this teaching. Just remember that the *Torah* says: 'Serve God with joy.'[8] Just as the 'serve God' must be always, so too must the 'with joy' be always. You must always be joyful."

Retold by Yitzhak Buxbaum, Light and Fire of the Baʿal Shem Tov, LFYB pp.151–52

Another Hasidic master who is remembered for his emphasis on living a joyful and happy life is Rabbi Naḥman of Bratslav (1772–1810). He says that happiness creates an atmosphere in which the mind becomes calm and one can worship God. He also emphasizes the importance of focusing on one's positive qualities and moving forward:

The main reason why people are far from God is because their minds are not settled and they do not pause to consider the purpose of their existence. But when a person is happy, his mind becomes settled and he is able to understand things clearly.

> Someone who is anxious and depressed finds it impossible to direct his thoughts where he wants. It is hard for him to calm and settle his mind. Only when a person is happy can he direct his thoughts wherever he wants and settle his mind.
>
> Joy *(simḥa)* is the world of freedom: "For you shall go out with joy *(simḥa)*."[9] Through joy *(simḥa)* we become free and leave our exile. When a person maintains a happy, joyous attitude, his mind and thoughts become free and he is no longer in exile. He can then direct his thoughts as he wants and settle his mind so as to focus on his goal and draw close to God.
>
> *Rabbi Naḥman of Bratslav, Likkutei Moharan, LMN2 p.10*

> When a person refuses to allow himself to fall into despair, but instead vitalizes himself by seeking out and gathering together his positive points, this produces melodies, and he can then pray, sing, and give thanks to God.
>
> *Rabbi Naḥman of Bratslav, Likkutei Moharan, LMN1 p.282*

> Through depression and sadness a man can forget who he really is. Therefore it is necessary to be continually in a state of joy *(simḥa),* no matter what low level a person may be at. Through joy *(simḥa)* also, one can give renewed life to another. For there are people who suffer greatly and they walk around full of suffering and worry. When someone approaches them with a happy face he is able to give them renewed life. To do this is not some empty matter, but an exceedingly great thing.
>
> *Rabbi Naḥman of Bratslav, Likkutei Moharan, in WJMU pp.68–69*

> When a man is continually in a state of joy *(simḥa)* then he can easily set aside an hour during the day to talk to God with a broken heart, and to pour out his soul before Him. But when a man is sad and depressed it is difficult for him to isolate himself with God, and to speak openly to Him. Therefore a man has to make an effort to be joyous *(simḥa)* always.
>
> *Rabbi Naḥman of Bratslav, Likkutei Moharan, in WJMU p.68*

In the *Tanya* ('We Have Learned'), the classic work of *Ḥabad* Hasidism by Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Lyady, the rabbi teaches how to attain true joy:

> To attain true joy *(simḥa),* contemplate God who is permeating all things. Realize that this world is nothing but divine glory and that all things are empty when seen from the perspective of God.
>
> *Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Lyady, Tanya, TBSZ p.149; cf. TMHW p.105*

Spiritual joy, however, is a higher state than happiness, and is not dependent on outer circumstances. As Rabbi Rami Shapiro, translator of the *Tanya,* comments:

> The realization of God in, with and as all things manifests as indescribable joy. Joy is not the same as happiness.… Happiness comes and goes dependent upon the circumstances of the moment, but joy is a deeper sense of the sublime that is sustained regardless of circumstance.
>
> *Rami Shapiro, Tanya, TMHW p.104*

See also: **bliss**, **joy**.

1. *Zohar* 1:141a, *WZ1* p.352.
2. *Psalms* 84:5, 144:15.
3. *Psalms* 19:8.
4. See Lawrence Fine, on Ḥayyim Vital, *Sha'ar ha-Miẓvot, Introduction, SMHV* p.3, in *PSHC* p.193.
5. Rabbi Yehudah Loew, *Ḥidushei Aggadot, CAM1* p.14.
6. Ya'akov Yosef, *Keter Shem Tov 129, KSTY* fol.16b, in *BMME* p.130.
7. *1 Chronicles* 16:27.
8. *Psalms* 100:2.
9. *Isaiah* 55:12.

bodhi (S/Pa/H), **byang chub** (T), **pútí**, **jué** (C), **bodai**, **kaku** (J) *Lit.* awakening; being of full consciousness; perfect mystic wisdom, knowledge, or gnosis; spiritual enlightenment, buddhahood; mystical or inner realization of the true nature of one's being; a transcendental state of consciousness in which all impurities have been annihilated; a predominantly Buddhist term for the spiritual status of a *buddha* or *arhat,* sometimes used in the Hindu and Jain traditions; the highest *samādhi* or state of consciousness; the state of liberation from the cycle of birth and death, including freedom from desire and all traces of individual existence; the state of an enlightened sage who has gained full mystic knowledge and understanding, breaking through all barriers of thought and mind to the oneness underlying everything; from the same root as *buddha* (awakened one, enlightened one). In *Zen* and *Chán* Buddhism, *bodhi* is also translated as *satori* (J) and *wù.*

To many early Buddhists, *bodhi* or *nirvāṇa* meant a state of eternal beatitude. Historically, Buddhism is founded on the belief that this was the state attained by Gautama Siddhārtha, who became known as the Buddha.

According to traditional belief, the Buddha attained enlightenment while seated in meditation beneath a tree, which became known as the *bodhi* tree. It is said that the tree was a pipal or sacred fig *(Ficus religiosa),* a species of

banyan fig regarded as sacred in the Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist traditions. The story, however, may be a misconception of the true Tree of Wisdom, 'Wisdom' being a common term for the creative power in the ancient world. It is under the 'shade' of this 'tree' that complete mystic enlightenment is attained.

Buddhism lists thirty-seven factors, in seven sets, that are necessary to attain enlightenment. These are known as the *bodhi-pākshika-dharma* (things pertaining to enlightenment). The seven sets comprising these thirty-seven principles include the seven *bodhyangas* ('limbs' of enlightenment) and the noble eightfold path *(āryāshṭānga-mārga).* Other factors include: control of the mind, mindfulness, good moral and ethical behaviour, discrimination, a burning desire for enlightenment, effort, persistence, concentration, meditation, and so on.

Pali sources use *bodhi* and *nibbāna* synonymously, both implying freedom from *lobha* (greed), *dosa* (anger, hatred), and *moha* (delusion). Early Buddhist sources also make no distinction between the enlightenment of an *arhat* (a fully liberated and enlightened being), a *pratyeka-buddha* (an independent, *i.e.* non-teaching, *buddha*), and a *buddha* who teaches others. Later Buddhist literature, however, especially from *Mahāyāna* sources, distinguishes between these three degrees of buddhahood, naming them respectively as *shrāvaka-bodhi* (enlightenment of the disciple), *pratyeka-bodhi* (private or individual enlightenment) and *samyak-sambodhi* (supreme enlightenment), of which the latter was deemed the highest. The *Mahāyāna* tradition also introduced the notion of the *bodhisattva* – one who vows not to enter a *nirvāṇa* from which there is no return, but to remain in the realms of rebirth until all sentient beings have attained enlightenment.

Endeavouring to understand and explain the nature of enlightenment, Buddhist philosophers and teachers have often resorted to riddles. It is generally agreed that enlightenment is the intrinsic nature of the mind, which is uncovered or discovered when all impurities and impediments have been removed:

> When we are in a position to discard both defilement and purity,
> then are we absolutely free.
> *Bodhi* is immanent in our mind essence;
> Any attempt to look for it elsewhere is foolish.
>
> *Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch 2, in BBDG p.246*

Bodhi is a matter of realization, after which the enlightened one has no further need of concepts. This "mind essence" or storehouse of primal consciousness is both aloof and immanent:

> The *buddha*-body *(buddhakāya)* fills the world,
> being universally immanent in all things;

It will manifest itself
wherever and whenever circumstances are right,
but it never leaves this seat of *bodhi.*
Traditional Gāthā, in Sermons of a Buddhist Abbot; cf. SBAZ p.62

In this sense, nothing – even something that is seemingly negative – is outside the experience of *bodhi,* as in the Buddhist sayings, "*Āsravas* (impurities) are nothing but *bodhi* (enlightenment)" and *"Saṃsāra* (transmigration) is nothing but *nirvāṇa."* The meaning is that everything is a part of one great whole.[1] As Dàjiàn Huìnéng (J. Daikan Enō), the sixth patriarch of Chinese *(Chán)* Buddhism, said:

> Defilement *(klesha)* is wisdom *(bodhi);* the two are the same and are not different from each other. . . . From the viewpoint of ordinary men, enlightenment and ignorance are two separate things. Wise men who thoroughly realize mind essence, know that these two are of the same nature. This sameness of nature, that is, this non-duality of nature, is what is called 'true nature'. It neither decreases in the case of an ordinary man and ignorant person, nor increases in the case of an enlightened sage; it is undisturbed in an annoying situation, and is calm in *samādhi* (deep meditation). It is neither eternal, nor not eternal; it neither comes, nor goes; it is to be found neither in the interior, nor in the exterior, nor in the space between them; it is beyond existence and nonexistence; its nature and its phenomena are always in a state of *Tathatā* (Suchness, the true nature of things); it is both permanent and immutable.
>
> *Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch; cf. in BBDG p.307*

Bodhi is thus a full awakening to the essential oneness of all things, perceiving no underlying duality or differences. In the *Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra,* when the Buddha was asked, "What is *bodhi?*", he replied, "Non-discrimination is *bodhi.*"[2]

According to the traditional story, when Hóngrěn (J. Kōnin), the fifth *Chán* patriarch was growing old, he made it known that he wished to appoint a successor. The head monk, Yùquán Shénxiù (J. Gyokusen Jinshū, 605–706), therefore presented a poem intended to demonstrate his degree of enlightenment:

Our body is the *bodhi* tree,
our mind a mirror bright.
Carefully wipe them hour by hour,
and let no dust alight.
Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch 1,
T48 2008:348b (Hekiganroku 5); cf. SWLL p.15

But the layman Huìnéng wrote a verse expressing a higher understanding:

> There is no *bodhi* tree,
> nor stand of mirror bright.
> Since all is void,
> where can the dust alight?
>
> *Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch 1,*
> *T48 2008:349a (Hekiganroku 5), SWLL p.18*

As a result of this poem, according to the story related by Huìnéng in the *Platform Sūtra,* he was appointed the sixth patriarch. Shénxiù subsequently founded what became known as the Northern School (in North China), which died out, while Huìnéng's school became known as the Southern School, surviving to the present day, especially in the form of Japanese *Zen* Buddhism. Shénxiù taught that the attainment of enlightenment was a gradual process *(jiànwù),* while the sixth patriarch believed in sudden enlightenment *(dùnwù)* and developed various forms of shock treatment in the endeavour to help his disciples realize this goal.[3]

Although founded on the same ideal of spiritual enlightenment, Jainism generally uses terms other than *bodhi* for this supreme state, such as *kevala-jñāna,* absolute knowledge. Perhaps the most frequently encountered Jain usage of *bodhi* is in one of the twelve *anuprekshās* (reflections, meditations) or *bhāvanās* (contemplations). Of these, the first is *anitya anuprekshā* (reflection on the impermanence of all things), and the eleventh is *bodhi-durlabha anuprekshā* (reflection on the rarity of enlightenment), which refers to the difficulties that must be surmounted before enlightenment can be attained.

See also: **bodhichitta** (▸4), **nirvāṇa**, **sambodhi**, **satori**.

1. *Buddhist Sayings,* in *ADAF* p.122 (n.2).
2. *Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra* 30, *TMSC* p.260.
3. See *Blue Cliff Records, TZC* p.160.

brahmabhūya (S) *Lit.* becoming *(bhūya) Brahman;* attainment or realization of the absolute Reality. In the *Bhagavad Gītā,* Kṛishṇa describes the requirements for this realization:

> Endowed with a purified understanding *(buddhi),*
> with steadfastness *(dhṛiti)* controlling the self *(ātman),*
> as well as sensations such as sound and so on,
> as also likes *(rāga)* and dislikes *(dvesha),*
> resorting to solitary places, eating little,

with body, tongue and mind under control,
always meditative, imbued with detachment *(vairāgya),*
having given up I-ness *(ahaṃkāra),* violence *(bala),*
arrogance *(darpa),* lust *(kāma),* and anger *(krodha)* –
Such a person becomes fit
for the attainment of *Brahman (brahmabhūya).*

Bhagavad Gītā 18:51–53

He who serves Me through never-failing love
transcends the *guṇas* and is fit to become *Brahman (brahmabhūya).*

Bhagavad Gītā 14:26

brahmajñāna (S), **Brahm gyān** (H/Pu) *Lit.* knowledge *(gyān)* of *Brahm;* the transcendental realization, knowledge or gnosis of *Brahman;* also known as *brahmavidyā.* According to the *Muṇḍaka Upanishad,* "He who knows the supreme *Brahman* becomes *Brahman.*"[1] The knowledge implied is not intellectual, but experiential *(anubhava).*

Brahm gyān represents a high stage of spiritual development. As Dariyā Sāhib observes:

When you attain *Brahm gyān*
illusion like a mountain is destroyed.

Dariyā Sāhib, Chune hue Shabd, Jhūlnā, Ashṭ padī 3:7, DSC p.19

Bullā Sāhib says:

One who has not recognized the Lord in his heart:
how can he understand *Brahm gyān?*

Bullā Sāhib, Shabd kā sār, Chetāvanī 4:1, BSSS p.7

And:

Everyone speaks of *Brahm gyān,*
the basis of all the *Vedas.*
But only they can understand it
who have actually experienced it.

Bullā Sāhib, Shabd kā sār, Brahm gyān 1:5, BSSS p.13

Gyān (knowledge), even of a mystical character is often contrasted with *bhakti* (love, devotion). The distinction drawn is that in knowledge, there is always a separation of the knower and the known. In love, there is only oneness and union.

See also: **brahmajñānī** (7.1), **Brahman** (2.1), **brahmavidyā**.

1. *Muṇḍaka Upanishad* 3:2.9.

brahmānand(a) (S/H) *Lit.* the bliss *(ānanda)* of the region of *Brahman;* the greatest of all the states of bliss enumerated in the *Upanishads.* The *Brahmānanda Vallī* ('Section on the Bliss of *Brahman*') of the *Taittirīya Upanishad* grades the degrees of bliss from that experienced by a spiritually minded human being, through increasingly higher realms of creation, until the final and greatest bliss of all is reached, the bliss of *Brahman (brahmānanda):*

> This is a consideration of bliss *(ānanda):* let there be a youth, a noble *(sādhu)* youth, well read, very quick and alert, very firm, very strong. Let this whole earth be full of wealth for him. Let that be a measure of one human bliss. . . .
>
> A hundred measures of human bliss are one measure of the bliss of the human *gandharvas* (genies, fairies), and also of a man who is well-versed in the scriptures *(shrotriya)* and who is not smitten with desire.
>
> *Taittirīya Upanishad 2:8.1*

The *Upanishad* then advances similarly through the bliss of the divine *gandharvas,* the ancestors, the gods of various kinds, of the deities *Indra, Bṛihaspati* and *Prajāpati,* and finally to the bliss of *Brahman:*

> A hundred measures of the bliss of *Prajāpati* are one measure of the bliss of *Brahman (brahmānanda),* and also of a man who is well-versed in the scriptures *(shrotriya)* and is not smitten with desire.
>
> *Taittirīya Upanishad 2:8.1*

In this context, a *shrotriya* signifies someone who is not only well-versed in the *Shrutis (Vedas* and *Upanishads),* but has also experienced the Reality of which they speak, and is thus a realized soul. They know the bliss of *Brahman.*

The *Upanishad* continues by saying that *brahmānanda* is transcendental, beyond the reach of words, speech, mind, and intellect. He who has experienced it no longer knows any fear (for he has become one with the divine Source of all):

> He who knows the bliss of *Brahman (brahmānanda)* – from which all words, together with the mind, turn back without ever reaching It – is no longer afraid of anything.
>
> *Taittirīya Upanishad 2:9.1*

Of this state, Shankara comments that it requires meditation together with control of the body and mind:

> If you fix the mind firmly on the Ideal, *Brahman,* and restrain the external organs in their respective centres, holding the body in stillness, taking no thought for its maintenance – then you will attain union with *Brahman,* and being one with It, will always drink joyfully of the bliss of *Brahman (brahmānanda)* within your own self, unceasingly. What is the use of other things, which are entirely hollow?
>
> *Shankara, Vivekachūḍāmaṇi 378; cf. VCSM pp.143–44*

> The absence of all thoughts concerning internal or external things – because the mind is absorbed in tasting the bliss of *Brahman* – is characteristic of one who is liberated-in-life *(jīvanmukta).*
>
> *Shankara, Vivekachūḍāmaṇi 435; cf. VCSM p.164*

The nineteenth-century mystic, Tulsī Sāhib, observes that many have misunderstood the meaning of the *shrotriya* in the *Taittirīya Upanishad,* taking it to mean someone who is simply well-versed in the scriptures, with no experience of the Reality taught therein. Here, *paramātam pad* (realm of the supreme soul) probably refers to the region of *trikuṭī,* the universal mind. Tulsī Sāhib counsels that with the help of a *guru* who has himself gone to the highest realm, it is possible to go higher:

> Men go on talking about their *brahmānand* by explaining the *Vedas:*
> They do not go beyond *paramātam pad,*
> and without a *guru,* human life is wasted.
>
> *Tulsī Sāhib, Shabdāvalī, Singh Sanbād, Shabd 7–8, TSH1 p.109*

brahmasvarūpa (S), **Brahm rūp**, **Brahm swarūp** (H/Pu) *Lit.* having the form *(swarūp, rūp)* of *Brahm;* one who has realized *Brahm* and has thereby become *Brahm* (or *Brahman*), the absolute transcendent Reality of the *Upanishads.* As Charandās writes:

> One who practises *dhyān* (contemplation) of *Auṃ*
> is doing the highest and best *dhyān.*
> With that, O Charandās, you will become *Brahm swarūp.*
>
> *Charandās, Bānī 1, Brahm gyān prāpti kā upāy, Ashṭ padī, CDB1 p.29*

And he is echoed by his disciple Sahajobāī:

You are happiness incarnate:
I bow to you, O my *guru* who is *Brahm swarūp.*
Sahajobāī, Bānī, Satguru mahimā kā ang 3, SBB p.1

You grant us pure happiness
and make us *Brahm rūp.*
You remove the miseries of this human birth.
Sahajobāī, Bānī, Satguru mahimā kā ang 4, SBB p.1

See also: **brahmavidyā**.

brahmavidyā (S) *Lit.* knowledge of *Brahman;* sacred knowledge, knowledge of the *Vedas,* the pursuit of Vedic (especially Upanishadic) wisdom as a way of life; also, direct, personal experience or gnosis of *Brahman.*

As the basis for an exposition of mystic teachings, a number of *Upanishads* have used the literary device of a seeker asking to be taught *brahmavidyā:*[1]

> Āshvalāyana approached the venerable lord *Brahmā,* saying, "O Lord, teach me the highest knowledge of *Brahman (brahmavidyā),* that which is sought constantly by the seekers of Truth, which is secret, and by which a wise man, being freed from all impurities, can reach the supreme Being *(Purusha).*"
>
> *Kaivalya Upanishad 1:1*

Brahmavidyā, says the *Muṇḍaka Upanishad,* can be imparted by a *guru* to a seeker who has the right frame of mind:

> To know It, one … should approach a *guru,*
> wise and established in *Brahman.*
> To one whose mind is tranquil, with senses under control,
> and who approaches in the right manner, let that gnostic *(vidvān)*
> impart knowledge of *Brahman (brahmavidyā)* in its very essence,
> that by which one knows the true, imperishable Being *(Purusha).*
>
> *Muṇḍaka Upanishad 1:2.12–13*

The later Indian mystic, Charandās, says much the same:

> When you willingly surrender your ego,
> only then can you begin the study of *Brahm vidyā.*
> *Charandās, Bānī 2, Mishrit, Shabd 32, CDB2 p.41*

See also: **brahmajñāna**, **vidyā**.

1. See also: *Shāṇḍilya Upanishad* 2:1–2; *Akshi Upanishad* 2:1; *Varāha Upanishad* 2:1.

breathing of the Holy Spirit, **breathing of God** A metaphorical way of speaking of the soul's experience of the Holy Spirit or Word. As it says in John's gospel:

> When he (Jesus) had said this, he breathed on them, and said unto them, "Receive the Holy Ghost."
>
> *John 20:22; cf. KJV*

John's gospel is written in a metaphorical and allegorical manner, where even seemingly external events are intended to convey an inner meaning. In this instance, Jesus, as an incarnation of the Word *(Logos),* blesses his disciples with the Holy Spirit, the Word or Breath of God.

Later Christian mystics also understood metaphor mystically. Thomas Kelly writes of "gentle receptiveness to divine breathings",[1] while John of the Cross says that it is the "Holy Spirit … that breathes" into the soul, raising her up spiritually:

> The Holy Spirit … as one that breathes, raises the soul most sublimely with his divine Breath, and informs and habilitates her, that she may breathe in God the same breath of love that the Father breathes in the Son.
>
> *John of the Cross, Spiritual Canticle 39:3, CWJC2 p.374*

It inspires the soul to fly to God:

> Even as the breeze stirs the hair and causes it to flutter upon the neck, even so does the breeze of the Holy Spirit move and excite strong love (in the soul, so) that it may make flights to God.
>
> *John of the Cross, Spiritual Canticle 31:4, CWJC2 pp.340–41*

It is a "visitation" of divine love and "greatly to be desired":

> In this breathing of the Holy Spirit through the soul, which is His visitation of her in love, the Spouse, who is the Son of God, communicates Himself to her in a lofty manner.… This divine Breath of the Holy Spirit is greatly to be desired, and … every soul (should) pray that he may breathe through its garden so that the divine fragrances of God may flow. And because this is … of such great glory and good for the soul, the Bride (soul) desired it, and prayed for it in the *Songs:*

> Rise up hence, north wind, and come, southwest wind,
> and breathe through my garden;
> And its fragrances and precious spices shall flow.[2]
> *John of the Cross, Spiritual Canticle 17:8–9; cf. CWJC2 pp.271–2*

Even so, whatever may be said of it is insufficient:

> Of that breathing of God, which is full of blessing and glory and of the delicate love of God for the soul, I should not wish to speak, neither do I desire now to speak; for I see clearly that I cannot say aught concerning it, and that, were I to speak of it, it would not appear as great as it is.
> *John of the Cross, Living Flame of Love 4:17, CWJC3 p.195*

In the Bible, the metaphor makes its first appearance in *Genesis,* where the "Breath of Life" – the Spirit – is the power that gives life:

> The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the Breath of Life; and man became a living soul.
> *Genesis 2:7, KJV*

Contrasting the voice of men with the divine Voice of God, Philo Judaeus depicts this breathing as a Voice which creates a sound that is heard in the soul and not through the ears:

> But the Power of God *(Theou Dynamis),* breathing forth vigorously, aroused and brought into being a new miraculous Voice, and spreading abroad its sound in every direction, made its ending more illuminating than its beginning by implanting in the soul of each individual another kind of hearing far superior to the hearing of the ears.
> *Philo Judaeus, Decalogue 9; cf. PCW7 pp.22–23, WPJ3 p.143*

This breathing sustains not only the soul, but the entire cosmos. Hence, Manichaean texts speak of the "Five Greatnesses" – the hierarchy of heavens – being sustained by

> the great Spirit breathing in them,
> nourishing them with His light.
> *Manichaean Psalm Book CCXXIII, MPB p.9*

See also: **Breath of God** (3.1).

1. Thomas Kelly, *Testament of Devotion, TDK* p.9.
2. *Song of Songs* 4:16.

bùdòng (C) *Lit.* without *(bù)* movement *(dòng),* motionless; the converse of *dòng* (movement); in Daoism, the state of mind desired by one seeking inner realization of the *Dào;* used synonymously with *jìng* (stillness, tranquillity) and *dòng,* both as a state of mind and in the cosmic scheme of things. See **jìng**.

bùdòng xīn, **xīn bùdòng** (C) *Lit.* motionless *(bùdòng)* mind *(xīn);* an unwavering mind; a mind that is unmoved; a mind that is stable and still when there is nothing for it to do, but returns to movement when there are necessary things to address.

In the Confucian philosophy of Mèngzǐ (*aka.* Mencius, *c.*371–289 BCE), a contemporary of Zhuāngzǐ, *bùdòng xīn* is the basis for declaring human nature to be originally good. Mèngzǐ's argument is that, since man is originally good, it follows that:[1]

1. Everyone possesses the innate knowledge of good and the "innate ability" to do good.[2]

2. One who "develops his mind to the utmost" can "serve heaven" and "fulfil his destiny".[3]

3. Evil is not inborn, but is due to man's own weaknesses and inability to avoid external evil influences.[4]

4. Serious effort needs to be made to recover one's original nature.

5. The "object of learning" is none other than to "seek for the lost (original) mind".[5]

The Daoist master Wáng Zhé (C12th) discourses on two complementary states of the mind *(xīn):* the need to control one's mind; and the need to focus it in a controlled state, lest it spoil inner awareness of one's *Dào*-nature:

> Let me explain the way *(dào)* of the mind *(xīn).* If the mind is always deep and tranquil, it will remain unmoving *(bùdòng).* In deep and silent abstruseness *(hūnhūn mòmò),* it will pay no attention to the myriad things *(wànwù).* In deep and impenetrable profundity *(míngmíng yǎoyǎo),* it will distinguish neither inside nor outside. Not even the slightest trace of thought will remain. This is a focused mind. It needs no controlling *(xiáng).*
>
> On the other hand, if the mind actively goes in pursuit of mental projections, it will become all topsy-turvy, searching for the head and finding the tail. This is a chaotic mind. You must cut it out and

> thoroughly eliminate it. Never let it run wild. It will ruin and destroy the *Dào* and Its virtue. It will harm and diminish your (true) nature and (true spiritual) life *(xìngmìng).*
>
> *Wáng Zhé, Chóngyáng lìjiào shíwǔ lùn 8, JY190 3b–4a, DZ1233; cf. TEAK p.90, HDP8 p.39*

In the *Scripture on Embryonic Breathing,* an anonymous text written sometime before the eighth century CE, the author states that when extraneous thoughts are completely eliminated, the mind will no longer run wild:

> If the mind is perfectly devoid of thoughts *(xīn bùdòng niàn)* – neither coming nor going, neither exiting nor entering – it will dwell permanently within of its own accord.
>
> *Tāixī jīng, DZ14; cf. TTEP p.65*

The *Book of Master Wén* (*c.*200 BCE) lists the characteristics of spiritual adepts throughout the ages. Among these characteristics is an unmoved mind – unmoved, for example, by poverty. Such a mind – a true mind *(zhēnxīn)* – is content, being free from the desire for anything more than the basic necessities of a simple, detached life:

> Since ancient times, those who have achieved self-realization *(cúnjǐ)* are happy with their state *(dé)* and do not mind lowliness. Fame cannot move their determination. They are happy with the *Dào* and do not mind poverty, so wealth cannot move their mind *(bùdòng xīn).* They are humble in order to be happy, still in order to be detached.
>
> *Wénzǐ 4, DZ746*

An eighteenth-century hermit, known by his Daoist name Yǎngzhēnzǐ ('Master who Cultivates Reality'), explains why actors are mentally unmoved by the fortunes and characteristics of the various parts they play on stage. They are aware that they are merely playing a part; that the part is unreal; and that the representations they portray have been artificially created by the imagination of the playwright. He advises seekers of the *Dào* to consider and learn from the way actors deal with the characters they depict:

> Before they can follow the path, those who study *Dào* must first recognize the true from the false. They should experiment with (living as if) playing a part in a play. Whether facing poverty or prosperity, gain or loss, separation or union, sorrow or joy, the observer remains outwardly at peace, and inwardly with a calm mind.
>
> What is to be learned from such an experiment? That one can have an unmoving mind *(bùdòng xīn),* which can clearly see that forms

> and appearances are artificial adornments, and that emotions in any situation are a pretence. Though feelings keep changing and shifting, they effect no loss or gain on the self *(jǐ).* By observing this, students can comprehend the *Dào.*
>
> *Yǎngzhēnzǐ, Yǎngzhēn jí, JY241*

Yǎngzhēnzǐ says that being mentally unmoved by feelings and events is like being in the uncreated state in which the mind is free from bondage:

> If one's mind remains unmoving *(xīn bùdòng)* when encountering objects, this is called being unborn *(bùshēng).* Being unborn *(bùshēng)* means being undying. Then this mind is not bound by the karmic *(chényuán)* entanglements *(fù)* of the physical world. Being unbound means liberation *(jiětuō).*
>
> *Yǎngzhēnzǐ, Yǎngzhēn jí, JY241*

In a commentary on a verse in master Zhāng Bóduān's (C11th) *Chapters on Awakening to Perfection,* master Liú Yīmíng (1734–1821) emphasizes the impermanence of life in the physical body, saying that those who realize this truth look forward to eternal life in the spirit. However, those who do not realize this truth, and become entangled in the web of material existence, will never be able to escape "coming and going (*láiwú, i.e.* reincarnation)", even if they acquire great wealth. To accomplish this, it is necessary to practise the "method of stilling the mind *(bùdòng xīn)*":

> The physical world of mortal life (*chén huán,* 'domain of dust') is in the realm of physical forms. It is the home of fame and fortune, where misery is taken for pleasure and the false is taken for the true; where vital essence *(jīng)* is consumed and life energy *(qì)* exhausted. (Original) nature and (true spiritual) life are thus lost, and only death exists. Those who realize this and transcend it are realized ones (*zhìrén*). Those who are unconscious of it and are trapped in it are deluded ones.
>
> Since olden times, the immortals *(xiān)* and true human beings *(zhēn)* who attained the *Dào* attended to their family and friends when they were young, so as to fulfil their worldly duties. When they reached forty, they practised the method of stilling the mind *(bùdòng xīn)* so as to preserve their (original) nature and (true spiritual) life. A hundred years is nothing but a brief moment. A lifetime of honour or dishonour goes by in the blink of an eye.
>
> If you are unaware of (the need to) revert to the Source, restore the Origin, and return to the Root to recover life, then, when the last moment of this life comes, even if you have mountains of gold, you

> will end up leaving empty-handed. So the author says, "Even if you accumulate mountains of gold, can you buy (your way out of) transience and cease coming and going *(láiwú)?*" Truly, this is a golden bell and a drum of truth to awaken all.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17*

An anecdote from the sayings of master Wáng Zhìjǐn (C13th) tells of a Daoist who claimed that his mind was immovable, but who failed to pass a test set by his master:

> In ancient times, east of the mountain, there lived a Daoist student who proclaimed to his master *(shī)* that through his practice he had extinguished the fire of ignorance.
>
> His master replied that when the fire of ignorance is extinguished, the mind does not move *(xīn bùdòng).* One then becomes a good human being *(hǎorén).*
>
> Later, the master secretly sent someone to test the Daoist. Arriving at the monastery at sundown after the gate had been closed, the man banged loudly on the gate with his staff. Answering from inside, the irritated Daoist grudgingly opened the door. He was visibly disturbed by the visitor's uncouth behaviour.
>
> When they got to the hall, the man jumped in without removing his shoes, and sat down without ceremony.
>
> The Daoist became very angry and began to reproach his visitor sternly. The visitor clasped his hands in obeisance and laughed, "I do not care to behave in such a way. The master sent me to examine your 'unmoving mind *(bùdòng dǐ xīn)*'. But, even before the test begins, it is already obvious. So there is no need for further examination."
>
> The Daoist was so ashamed that he had nothing to say.
>
> *Wáng Zhìjǐn, Pánshān qīyún yǔlù, JY229 19a–b, DZ1059*

The development of an unmoving mind is progressive. Master Yáng Dàoshēng (C15th) describes five stages of meditation through which a practitioner passes before reaching that of an unmoving mind:

> For those who attain *Dào,* their mind goes through five (internal) stages *(wǔshí).*... The five stages of the mind *(xīn)* are: more movement *(dòng),* less stillness *(jìng);* half movement, half stillness; more stillness, less movement; stillness when relaxed, movement when working; the mind merged with the *Dào* and unmoved *(bùdòng)* by anything outside. On reaching this stage, the mind gains peace and bliss – no more pain or suffering, no more anguish or misery.
>
> *Yáng Dàoshēng, Zhēnquán, JY244, ZW373*

1. See Wing-Tsit Chan, *Source Book in Chinese Philosophy, SBCP* p.50.
2. *Mèngzǐ* 7:15.1; *cf. LWML* p.350.
3. *Mèngzǐ* 7:1.1–3; *cf. LWML* pp.343–44.
4. *E.g. Mèngzǐ* 6:8.2, *LWML* p.315.
5. *Mèngzǐ* 6:11.4, *LWML* p.318.

cetasika (Pa), **chaitasika**, **chaitta** (S), **sems byung** (T), **xīn suǒyǒu fǎ** (C), **shinjo** (J) *Lit.* mind *(citta, sems)* factor *(byung);* mental concomitant, mental state; aspects of mind associated with the arising of the various states of mind or consciousness (Pa. *citta,* S. *chitta*), and from which the *cittas* are derived; states of mind in the *Theravāda Abhidhamma* and later Buddhism; in Tibetan Buddhism, one among five groups of *dharmas* (C. *fǎ,* mental phenomena, mental things). The term *chaitasika* is a later form of *chaitta,* both being found in the Buddhist Sanskrit commentaries.

According to the *Abhidhammattha Sangaha* ('Compendium of *Abhidhamma*') of Anuruddha (*c.*C11th–12th), a standard *Abhidhamma* work, there are fifty-two *cetasikas,* arranged in seven categories. These *cetasikas* are general categories of mental activity *(cittas),* of which there are eighty-nine or a hundred and twenty-one, according to how detailed an analysis is applied:

1. *Sabba-sādhāraṇa cetasikas. Lit.* entirely universal *(sabba-sādhāraṇa) cetasikas,* common to all *cittas.* They are of seven kinds:

Phassa. Lit. contact; not physical contact, but contact of the consciousness with the object of consciousness, which may be a sensory or mental object, *e.g.* vision-contact consciousness, hearing-contact consciousness, *etc.* This contact is the first step in the process of cognition and experience. Consciousness comes into contact *(phassa)* with sense objects a split second before they are presented to consciousness. See **phassa** (▸1).

Vedanā. Lit. feeling, sensation; experience of the object, which may be pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral. As physical sensations, feelings can be painful, pleasurable, or neutral. It is *vedanā* that experiences the fruits of *kamma* performed either in this or a previous life. The experience of *nibbāna,* however, is not regarded as *vedanā.* See **vedanā** (▸1).

Saññā. Lit. perception, cognition; a term with a wide range of meaning, depending on the context. As one of the *cetasikas, saññā* is cognition of the nature of an object, such as its colour; it is also recognition of an object previously perceived. It is basic sense perception and recognition. See **saññā** (▸1).

Cetanā. Lit. volition, intention; individual will, which determines action, automatically incorporating other *cetasikas,* according to the individual's nature. *Cetanā* is responsible for the creation of *kamma,* wholesome or unwholesome. See **cetanā** (▸4).

Ekaggatā. Lit. one-pointedness; that which focuses the consciousness and the *cetasikas* that are actively associated with a particular object of attention. *Ekaggatā* tries to hold the various *cetasikas* together, preventing dissipation and attempting to create a focus on the object of attention. Ultimately, *ekaggatā* can develop into *sammā-samādhi* (true concentration, right concentration), the final aspect of the noble eightfold path. See **ekāgratā**.

Jīvitindriya. Lit. faculty of life, vitality; the energy that infuses life into *cetanā* and other associated *cetasikas.* It is twofold: physical *(rūpa)* and mental *(nāma). Jīvitindriya* keeps the five *khandhas* (aggregates) in play for the duration of life. The five *khandhas* are the materio-mental 'aggregates' or stuff that comprise a human being. Just as a boatman depends on his boat, and the boat depends on the boatman, so does *jīvitindriya* depend on mind and matter, and mind and matter depend on *jīvitindriya.*

Manasikāra. Lit. making in the mind, intentionally directing the mind to something, the application of attention; the mental factor or aspect of mind that turns the mind towards something and provides direction. It is like the rudder of a boat, without which the boat has no control over its course, and meanders about, completely out of control. See **manasikāra**.

2. *Pakiṇṇaka. Lit.* occasional *cetasikas;* not present in all *cittas;* mental factors that play a key role in determining morality. Each one can be a part of both wholesome *(kusala)* or unwholesome *(akusala) cittas.* They are of six kinds:

Vitakka. Thought; in this context, the formation of a thought, the beginning of a thought process, the initial conception of a thought, the initial directing of the mind towards something. See **vitakka**.

Vicāra. Lit. pondering; in this context, the sustained application of thought; the morally neutral function of the mind that distinguishes the further aspects of something after it has been initially registered. The initial interest is *vitakka* and further thinking is *vicāra. Vitakka* is to point the mind at something; *vicāra* is to hold onto that something. *Vitakka,* for

instance, is an initial thought concerning someone; *vicāra* is thinking about that person in detail. See **vichāra**.

Adhimokkha. Lit. decision, choosing; determination, resolve; the *cetasika* that makes decisions, bringing another *cetasika* to the fore as the dominating influence, such as the effort to overcome *uddhacca* (agitation), *vicikicchā* (doubt), or *paṭigha* (anger). See **adhimokkha** (▸4).

Viriya. Lit. effort, vigour, enthusiasm; a mental factor that energizes, supports and encourages the *cetasikas* associated with it, overcoming inertia and laziness; as one of the four bases of spiritual power *(iddhipāda),* a means of accomplishing one's ends. *Viriya* in its highest form is *sammā-vāyāma* (right effort), an aspect of the noble eightfold path. See **viriya** (▸4).

Pīti. Lit. zest, joy, gladness, pleasurable interest; like the other *pakiṇṇaka cetasikas,* it can be related to wholesome or unwholesome *cittas*. See **pīti**.

Chanda. Lit. desire; the wish to do something, like stretching out a hand to grasp something. *Chanda* is classified as being of three kinds: *kāmacchanda,* which is sensual desire, one of the five hindrances *(nīvaraṇa)* and essentially unwholesome or immoral; *kattukamyatā-chanda,* the morally neutral wish to do something; and *dhammacchanda,* a wholesome or righteous wish, such as the desire to seek enlightenment. *Viriya* is effort and striving; *pīti* is interest; and *chanda* is intention. See **chanda** (▸4).

3. *Akusala cetasikas. Lit.* unwholesome mental factors; negative states of mind. They are of fourteen kinds: *moha* (delusion), *ahirika* (shamelessness), *anottappa* (fearlessness in doing wrong), *uddhacca* (restlessness, agitation). Unlike the rest, these four are common to all forms of *akusala-citta,* and are called *akusala-sādhāraṇa cetasikas* (universal unwholesome *cetasikas*). The remainder are: *lobha* (greed), *diṭṭhi* (wrong view), *māna* (conceit), *dosa* (anger, hatred, aversion), *issā* (envy), *macchariya* (avarice, concealment of prosperity), *kukkucca* (worry, also feeling low), *thīna* (sloth, sluggishness), *middha* (torpor, drowsiness), and *vicikicchā* (doubt, uncertainty).[1]

4. *Sobhana cetasika. Lit.* beautiful mental factors, which are universally present in all *kusala-cittas* (wholesome *cittas*). They are of nineteen kinds: *saddhā* (faith); *sati* (mindfulness); *hiri* (shame of doing wrong); *ottappa* (shrinking away from doing wrong); *alobha* (absence of greed,

detachment); *adosa* (absence of anger, hatred or ill will, *i.e.* lovingkindness, *mettā*); *tatra-majjhattatā* (neutrality of mind, impartiality, observing and correcting other *cittas, i.e. upekkhā*); *kāya-passaddhi* and *citta-passaddhi* (tranquillity of mind and consciousness, bringing peace to an agitated mind); *kāya-lahutā* and *citta-lahutā* (lightness or fleetness of mind and consciousness, lightening the heaviness of impure *cittas*); *kāya-mudutā* and *citta-mudutā* (malleability of mind and consciousness, absence of rigidity, opposed to *diṭṭhi* – false views, and *māna* – conceit); *kāya-kammaññutā* and *citta-kammaññutā* (practicality and adaptability of mind and body); *kāya-pāguññatā* and *citta-pāguññatā* (proficiency and skill in mind and consciousness); *kāyujjukatā* and *cittujjukatā* (uprightness and rectitude of mind and consciousness).[2]

In these contexts, *kāya* (body) refers to the mind or mental body. *Alobha, adosa* and *amoha* (absence of delusion) are the three wholesome roots. *Alobha* is equivalent to *dāna* (generosity), *adosa* is equivalent to *mettā* (lovingkindness), and *amoha* is not listed here because it is implied by *paññā* (wisdom), which is the final *cetasika.*

5. *Virati cetasikas. Lit.* abstinence *cetasikas;* to refrain from wrong conduct in speech, action, and livelihood; these are three aspects of the noble eightfold path: *sammā-vācā* (right speech), *sammā-kammanta* (right action), and *sammā-ājīva* (right livelihood). See **ariya-aṭṭhangika-magga** (‣4).

6. *Appamaññā cetasikas. Lit.* illimitable *cetasikas,* of which there are two: *karuṇā* (compassion) and *muditā* (appreciative joy, joy at other's welfare). In fact, according to the Pali *suttas,* there are four illimitables, the other two being *mettā* (lovingkindness) and *upekkhā* (equanimity), but since they are covered by *adosa* (absence of anger or ill will), they do not get listed here. See **brahmavihāra** (8.5), **karuṇā** (‣4), **muditā**.

7. *Paññā. Lit.* wisdom concerning the true nature of all things; also called *amoha* (absence of delusion). See **prajñā**.

These basic *cetasikas* are understood to be combined in various ways to make the eighty-nine or one hundred and twenty-one *cittas.* The seven universals are present in all *cittas;* the four primary unwholesome *cetasikas* are common to all forms of unwholesome *citta;* the nineteen beautiful *cetasikas* are present in all wholesome *cittas,* and so on.

This classification of *cetasikas* elaborated by the *Abhidhamma* was adopted by later Buddhist schools, which attempted to refine the system. The Sanskrit *Abhidharma* of the *Vaibhāshika* school of *Sarvāstivāda* lists forty-six *chaitasikas,* for example, while the *Yogāchāra* school, as described by

Vasubandhu in his *Abhidharmakosha* – which became the standard Sanskrit Buddhist classification in India – lists fifty-one *chaitasikas* in six categories, with some variations from the Pali list.

See also: **citta**.

1. See **dṛishṭi** (8.4) and other relevant entries in ▸4.
2. See **passaddhi**, **tatra-majjhattatā** and other relevant entries in ▸4.

ceto-vimutti (Pa) *Lit.* liberation *(vimutti)* of the mind *(ceta).* See **vimutti**.

chán (C) *Lit.* cicada; Chinese symbol for eternal youth and happiness, for purity and detachment, and for immortality and life after death. In Chinese, the two different characters for cicada and for *Chán* (J. *Zen*) Buddhism are pronounced the same way.

According to ancient Chinese folklore, the cicada lives entirely on dew and morning air. Hence, the cicada is regarded as a pure and spiritual creature, often likened to the pure and clean character of the spiritually advanced, who are detached from the world.

The cicada's life cycle is used as a metaphor for spiritual life. The juvenile lives from ten to seventeen years underground, depending on the species. When it eventually emerges, it completes its transformation into an adult by shedding its skin one last time, before flying up into a tree to sing its mating song. Daoists often take the cicada's life of extended quiet and hidden cultivation, followed by transformation, as an analogy for the spiritual journey. The cicada's metamorphosis – shedding its shell and flying away *(chāotuō)* – is likened to *yǔhuà* (ascent to heaven, immortality) in Daoism and *nirvāṇa* in Buddhism.

See also: **chángshēng**, **yǔhuà**.

chañchalatā, **chañchalatva** (S), **chañchaltā** (H) *Lit.* unsteadiness, restlessness, fickleness; related to *chañchala* (moving to and fro, unsteady, wavering, restless, unstable, volatile, fickle); in spiritual literature, the nature of an uncontrolled mind.

Mystics have described the human mind as *chañchal* because it never rests, flitting from one object to another. It is constantly agitated, unable to focus on one thing for any period of time, and unable to concentrate in meditation. In the *Bhagavad Gītā,* Arjuna complains to Kṛishṇa:

Due to the constant restlessness *(chañchalatva)* of my mind,
I do not experience firm *(sthira)* establishment in *yoga*
through the cultivation of balance,
in the way you have instructed.

Truly, O Kṛishṇa, my mind is restless *(chañchala),*
turbulent, unyielding, and strong.
To control it, I think,
is more difficult than controlling the wind.

Bhagavad Gītā 6:33–34; cf. BGT

The human mind has always been the same. Over two millennia later, Swami Shiv Dayal Singh (1818–1878) says the same:

If the mind is unsteady *(chañchal)*
then understanding, too, will be wavering.
How then can you obtain the bliss of the soul
which is steady?

Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 24:1.55, SBP p.203

Your body has not remained still,
and you have no idea
how extremely unsteady *(chañchal)* the mind is.

Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 24:3.10, SBP p.209

And he also explains what it is that will control the mind:

When the *Dhun* (Sound) is heard in *gagan,*
the soul gets absorbed.
Then my restlessness *(chañchaltā)* is driven away,
and the mind is rendered pure.

Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 20:14.2–3, SBP p.163

See also: **sthira**.

chángshēng, **shòu**, **chángshòu** (C) *Lit.* long *(cháng)* life *(shēng, shòu),* longevity, as in the expression *chángshēng bùsǐ* (long life no death, *i.e.* immortality); spiritually, eternal life, immortal life, immortality; a cherished Daoist goal, less in the sense of perpetuating physical life than in realizing the immortality of the spirit.

Some Daoists identified the attainment of salvation not only with liberation of the immortal spirit, but also with perpetuation of the physical body. By

means of ascetic practices, they worked to improve the health and strength of both their spiritual and physical selves, seeking physical longevity as well as oneness with the *Dào.* Their intention was perfection, both spiritual and physical – to transform themselves into superhuman beings with limitless longevity and extraordinary powers. The ultimate aim was liberation of both body and spirit.

The classic Daoist text the *Dàodé jīng* (*c.*C3rd BCE), on the other hand, pays little attention to perpetuation of the physical body. Indeed, it says:

> What makes me liable to great suffering
> is having a body *(shēn);*
> If I had no body *(shēn),* what great suffering could befall me?
>
> *Dàodé jīng 13; cf. TT1 p.56*

Daoists who believe that a person may extend his lifespan by promoting physical health *(yǎngshēng)* engage in cultivation and preservation of *qì* (subtle life energy). This is achieved through various methods, including breathing and physical exercises, quiet meditation, dietary regimes including fasting or avoidance of certain foods, and (in some schools) certain sexual practices.

According to a story related in the *Zhuāngzǐ* (*c.*C3rd BCE), the legendary sage-ruler Huángdì ('Yellow Emperor') – then in his nineteenth year of rule – visited the old sage Guǎngchéngzǐ ('Master of Wide Achievement') to seek advice on how to achieve longevity:

> Huángdì, with an air of deferential submission, went forward on his knees, twice bowed low with his face to the ground, and asked him, saying, "I have heard, Sir, that you are well acquainted with the perfect *Dào.* I venture to ask how I should govern my body, in order that it may last a long time."
>
> Guǎngchéngzǐ quickly rose, and said, "A good question! Come, I will tell you of the perfect way *(dào).* Its essence is of the deepest obscurity; its highest reach is in darkness and silence. There is nothing to be seen and nothing to be heard. When it holds the spirit in its arms in stillness, then the (bodily) form will automatically be governed aright. You must be still *(jìng);* you must be pure *(qīng),* not subjecting your body to toil, not agitating your vital essence *(jīng)* – then you may live long *(chángshēng).* When your eyes see nothing, your ears hear nothing, and your mind knows nothing, then your spirit will keep your body, and the body will live long *(chángshēng).*
>
> "Pay attention to what is within you, and close the avenues that connect you to what is without.… Watch over and maintain your body, and all things will of themselves give it vigour. I maintain the unity (of its elements) and dwell in their harmony. In this way I have cultivated

> myself for one thousand and two hundred years, and my bodily form has undergone no decay."
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 11; cf. TT1 pp.298–99*

Throughout Chinese history, longevity techniques, in one form or another, have been practised for the purpose of maintaining physical health. To this day, a great many people – sometimes meeting in public parks – perform daily *qìgōng* and *tàijíquán* exercises, both of which have evolved from ancient health and longevity practices.

Probably due to the growing Buddhist influence on Daoism during the early centuries CE, Daoist concern for spiritual enlightenment and transcendence gained prominence over physical longevity and immortality. Three schools of thought have persisted into modern times: those whose interest is in physical longevity; those whose only concern is the realization of spiritual longevity; and those who practise both, with differing degrees of priority.

The anonymous *Sacred Treatise on the Great Mystery* (C12th) explains the meaning of physical and spiritual longevity:

> Longevity *(chángshēng)* can mean lengthening your life and not dying *(bùsǐ)*. It can also mean that, when you shed your shell, your spirit does not die *(bùsǐ)* with the body.
>
> *Tàixuán bǎodiǎn, DZ1034, NEL (1:3.7) p.88*

Master Sīmǎ Chéngzhēn (C8th), known for his emphasis on spiritual rather than physical immortality, explains how it is possible to realize – "in one's human body *(rénshēn)*" – the eternal nature of the spirit:

> Desiring eternal life *(chángshēng)* in one's human body *(rénshēn)* – how is it possible?
>
> All craving and aversion arise from delusion. By accumulating delusion, instead of expelling it, one obscures the vision of the *Dào*. Therefore, relinquish all desires and abide in nonexistence! Be placid, pure and well-rooted, and only then turn to contemplation *(guān)*. Whatever you loved before will then only lead to weariness and disdain.
>
> *Sīmǎ Chéngzhēn, Zuòwàng lùn 5, DZ1036 11b, JY213; cf. TEAK pp.240–41*

Master Lǐ Dàochún (C13th) emphasizes the fact that human beings are inherently immortal – not physically, but spiritually. For this reason, there is no need to seek physical longevity. When the immortal spirit is liberated, it will no longer be distracted by the "rapid currents" of worldly life. Masters, he adds, are always willing to divulge their methods to a "like-minded friend":

Everyone already has the medicine of eternal life *(chángshēng)*
within themselves.
The method of *Dào* is implanted in them,
but they do not follow it.
Who can turn his attention inward
when his eyes are dazzled by transient beauties?
Who can contemplate within
when his passions are drawn by passing clouds?
I observe Yěyún Wēng ('Old Man of Free Cloud')
from the River Yǐng,
who has broken free of the gold chains and jade shackles,
has courageously withdrawn from the rapid currents
to seek the mystic breeze (the *Dào*).
Blessed it is to meet a like-minded friend,
to whom I impart all the mysteries known only to heaven.

Lǐ Dàochún, Zhōnghé jí, DZ249, JY226

Daoist masters advise that true 'longevity' is already within the human body in the form of the spirit; it simply needs to be realized. Yet, many people – even after hearing the teachings of enlightened masters – do not understand the significance of the spirit and, as master Zhāng Bóduān (C11th) laments, waste their lives:

Everyone inherently has the medicine for eternal life *(chángshēng):*
it is just that they have got lost along the way
and have discarded it in vain.

Zhāng Bóduān, Wùzhēn piān, DZ141

The realization of spiritual immortality results from spiritual practice. As the spirit becomes more refined, it becomes more attuned to the *Dào.* Human beings are essentially spiritual beings, explains master Wáng Jiè (C14th). As soon as the spirit is attuned to the *Dào,* it realizes its eternal spiritual nature and is liberated from the limitations of material existence:

We human beings are alive *(shēng)* only because of the (true spiritual) life *(mìng)* within us. Our (inherent spiritual) life *(mìng)* is nothing but our (original) nature *(xìng).* Our (original) nature *(xìng)* is actually spirit *(shén);* our (true spiritual) life *(mìng)* is actually Energy *(qì).* It is spirit *(shén)* that commands this one body (*yīshēn, i.e.* the physical body); it is energy *(qì)* that sustains and preserves this one body. Only by careful vigilance *(shǒu)* does the spirit *(shén)* remain undissipated; only when energy *(qì)* is peaceful, does it remain unscattered.

> When spirit *(shén)* and energy *(qì)* are merged as one, then the deep and inexhaustible emptiness of the *Dào* (is experienced). This is how to attain immortality *(chángshēng)* and enduring contemplation *(jiǔshì),* which transcend the hubbub of the material world.
>
> *Wáng Jiè, Dàoxuán piān 3, DZ1075*

The Daoist terms *jīng, qì* and *shén* relate to different forms or aspects of one energy as it manifests at three centres in the body. The centre for *jīng,* often called the 'lower elixir field', is variously described as the kidneys, the reproductive organs, or is simply identified as being below the diaphragm. The centre for *qì,* the 'middle elixir field' is the heart area or above the diaphragm. The centre for *shén* is the head, the 'upper elixir field'. When these three energies are scattered throughout the body, away from their respective centres, they are referred to as *jīng, qì,* and *shén.* When they are collected at their centres through spiritual practice, they are termed *yuánjīng, yuánqì* and *yuánshén,* where *yuán* (original) refers to the primordial, innate energies that pre-exist human existence. Put another way, the bodily *jīng, qì* and *shén* are reflections of their original or higher forms – *yuánjīng, yuánqì,* and *yuánshén.* The same applies to the term *xìng* (nature). When dispersed throughout the body, one's nature is excitable and scattered. When stilled, it becomes calm, and one's true or original nature *(yuánxìng)* is revealed.

Those who consider spiritual immortality to be of greater importance than physical immortality speak of physical longevity as unreal, false, or artificial. They see physical longevity as temporary, while spiritual longevity is real or eternal. Master Yáng Dàoshēng (C15th) points out the dangers inherent in some of the practices used by seekers of physical longevity, especially the ingestion of drugs and other potentially dangerous concoctions:

> In the early days, after I had first met my master *(zǔshī),* I begged him for teachings concerning eternal life *(chángshēng).* My master *(zǔshī)* told me, "There are true *(zhēn)* and false *(wěi)* teachings on eternal life *(chángshēng).* The false *(wěi)* teaching is the practice of alchemists *(fāngshì).* The true *(zhēn)* teaching is the practice of travellers on the path of *Dào (dàoshì).*" …
>
> Those seeking eternal life *(chángshēng)* through (alchemical) techniques will, instead, end up destroying their lives. Those pursuing the *Dào* will not only live long *(chángshēng),* but will also truly experience eternity *(wúshēng).*
>
> There is a great difference between the true and the false, and between alchemical techniques and the *Dào.* Those with insight will automatically know the difference.
>
> *Yáng Dàoshēng, Zhēnquán, JY244, ZW373*

Referring to the primal emptiness of the *Dào* – empty of all sense of self, change, duality or multiplicity – he continues:

> You might ask, "Can the great *Dào* of Nothingness *(xūwú)* prolong life *(chángshēng)?*"
>
> The *Dàodé jīng* says, "*Dào* creates life; spirit *(shén)* sustains life."[1] If you can preserve the spirit, even in the face of the power of death, the spirit can give life energy to the dry bones of the past seven generations.
>
> The *Wénzǐ* says, "To nurture the spirit is best; to nurture the body is less important. When the spirit is pure, energy is at peace, and the body is calm. That is the foundation for nurturing life." …
>
> The true meaning of eternal life *(chángshēng)* is embodied in being void and empty. Yet eternal life *(chángshēng)* by perfecting the spirit can only be achieved in accordance with nature. …
>
> Lǎozǐ said, "Even my hair is turning white. Who can remain whole forever?"[2]
>
> *Yáng Dàoshēng, Zhēnquán, JY244, ZW373*

Citing sages and masters of the past, Yáng Dàoshēng is saying that physical longevity is of less importance than spiritual life. He explains that one's lifespan may nevertheless be automatically extended as a direct result of the "preservation of pure *qì*" and its transmutation into pure spirit. This is a part of the spiritual practice of sublimating body and mind into spirit in order to unite with the *Dào.* Master Yáng's focus is clearly on attaining liberation of the eternal spirit and not on "remaining in the physical body":

> It may be asked, "What is it to transcend worldliness *(chāotuō)?*"
>
> Báiyùchánzǐ says, "To transcend *(chāo)* is to ascend beyond. It refers to the manifestation and emergence of the spirit *(shén). Tuō* means to shed the physical body."
>
> These words refer to leaving the abode of the physical body by refining the original spirit *(yuánshén)* and returning to the Great Void *(tàixū),* not remaining in the physical body. So advanced sages clearly do not relish the prolonging of life *(chángshēng).* Why then do people today admire longevity *(chángshēng)* so much?
>
> People often hear of those who have attained the *Dào* in ancient times. Even though they had a physical body, they could pass without harm through water or fire, metal or stone, because they were completely merged in the Void. They could walk in the air without falling, and pass through solid objects without hindrance.
>
> Regarding the preservation of pure *qì:* when scattered it becomes energy, when collected it forms a body. So the preservation of pure

> energy is the refined subtlety of body and spirit, and its true union with *Dào*. Only when the physical body has been renounced can it develop the quality of an immortal. How then can they not achieve the ineffable form *(xíng)* and spirit *(shén)?*
>
> *Yáng Dàoshēng, Zhēnquán, JY244, ZW373*

Considering the fabled longevity of cranes and tortoises, master Liú Yīmíng (1734–1821) emphasizes the importance of preserving and 'filling up' the *qì,* and of maintaining and completing the spirit – of realizing its natural wholeness. He points out a number of ways by which longevity may be achieved, though as a natural by-product of the spiritual practices that are his main concern:

> Because the crane is adept at storing spirit *(shén),* its root is fostered so that it lives a long life of a thousand years *(qiānnián chángshēng).* Because the tortoise is adept at nurturing energy *(qì),* it can live for a hundred years without eating food.
>
> As I observe this, I realize that this is the *dào* (way, principle) of perpetuating life *(yánnián yìshòu).* Humble and lower yourself. Be soft, yielding, simple, and natural. This does not deplete energy; rather, it constantly nurtures energy. Then energy will be full *(zú).* Free yourself from ego and thought, diminish desires and lessen contrivance. This does not burden the spirit; rather, it constantly restores the spirit. Then the spirit will become complete.
>
> When energy is full *(zú)* and spirit is complete *(quán),* the root is firm and the foundation is stable, and everything endures without decay. It is certainly reasonable that life should be perpetuated *(yánnián yìshòu).* If a crane (by keeping its spirit complete) and a tortoise (by keeping its energy complete) can prolong life *(chángshēng),* how can one who keeps both spirit and energy complete, not live long *(chángshēng)?*
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùdào lù, ZW268, DS18*

Master Liú also adds that longevity is a by-product of seeking the *Dào.* Trying to prolong one's physical existence by alchemical methods is seen as unnecessary when the far greater benefits of the *Dào* are realized:

> The *Dào* is such a treasure that, when realized, it prolongs one's life *(shòukǎo).* It has no need for cinnabar and lead (alchemical ingredients). . . . It is perfectly simple, unassuming, and straightforward. It is absolutely spiritual, true, and good. People foolishly seek everywhere for mysterious wonders, not knowing that the wonder already exists and the means of preserving it.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùdào lù, ZW268, DS18*

Shuǐjīngzǐ (*aka.* Zhào Yīmíng, *fl.*C16th) notes that human beings have to die, and emphasizes the fact that the immortality to be sought is of the spirit, not the body. The physical body and human effort are nevertheless essential for spiritual attainment. The "gate" referred to is the *xuánguān* (mysterious gate), the point of transition between the physical and spiritual realms, through which the spirit escapes the body and ascends to spiritual realms:

> Since ancient times, it has been said that people must die. However, it is said in the *Lǚshìchūnqiū* ('Spring and Autumn Annals') that "if human beings can open the mysterious gate *(xuánguān),* then they will not die *(bùsǐ).*" Immortality *(shòu)* is in the spirit *(shén).*
>
> The scriptures *(shèngjīng)* say, "All things have a beginning and an end; all events have a start and a finish. Understand this sequence, and you will be close to the *Dào.* The gate that gives me life is the gate that gives me death. Only a few understand this intuitively.... Immortality *(chángshēng bùsǐ)* can only be achieved by human effort."
>
> *Shuǐjīngzǐ, Qīngjìng jīng (3) túzhù, ZW77; cf. CSTM p.18*

Shuǐjīngzǐ adds in a poem that by spiritual practice one's "years will be lengthened", and one should "take advantage of the fact that the breath of life is still present" to learn the art of spiritual immortality. This is because, when inevitable death arrives, one leaves the world with nothing else. Therefore, Shuǐjīngzǐ encourages practitioners to add "oil to the lamp" of spiritual life in order to ensure that there is ample time to complete their spiritual practice (to "preserve the great harmony") and attain spiritual immortality. "Great harmony" refers to the perfect union of the spirit with *Dào:*

> The sages say:
> Female and male, pure and impure,
> return to the Origin and search for the true experience!
> Action is associated with the sun and movement,
> inaction is associated with stillness.
> Receive the Source and your years will be lengthened *(yánnián):*
> lose the Source and you will lose everything.
>
> Hurry! Turn back to the Origin and cultivate compassion;
> Take advantage of the fact that the breath of life is still present
> and learn the art of eternal life *(chángshēng).*
> Although you may accumulate gold and property,
> you will leave the world empty-handed....
>
> Rare are those who know the path of eternal life *(chángshēng).*
> If mortals in this world do not want to die,
> they must lengthen their lives,

adding oil to the lamp,
and preserving the great harmony.
Shuǐjīngzǐ, Qīngjìng jīng (3) túzhù, ZW77; cf. CSTM pp.19–20

Nevertheless, the lure of material existence is generally too great. Hence, an eighteenth-century Daoist hermit known as Yǎngzhēnzǐ ('Master who Cultivates Reality') laments the fact that people will neither cease doing the things that hasten their inevitable death, nor will they follow the path to spiritual immortality:

> People enjoy life, but not the path leading to eternal life *(chángshēng).*
>
> People dislike death, but they do not dislike all the things that contribute to death.
>
> As long as people are in the world, life goes on, but eventually they die. When they are facing death, how can they avoid it?
>
> It would be better to reverse such thinking sooner rather than later by letting go of the many worldly entanglements and experiencing the eternal life *(chángshēng)* that extends beyond human existence. Surely that would be a good thing?
>
> *Yǎngzhēnzǐ, Yǎngzhēn jí, JY241*

According to master Lǐ Dàochún (C13th), "outer medicine" (physical exercises, good deeds, *etc.*) may help to enhance well-being, but only "inner medicine" (spiritual practice) will lead to the return of one's original essential nature *(yuánxìng):*

> Outer medicine *(wàiyào)* is for curing diseases and prolonging life *(chángshēng).* Inner medicine *(nèiyào)* is for going from existence *(yǒu)* to nonexistence *(wú).*
>
> Learning about the *Dào* generally begins with outer medicine; from that, people pass naturally to the study of inner medicine. By virtue of their merit from cultivation (in past lives), spiritually advanced human beings are born with knowledge, and thus begin with the refinement of inner medicine rather than starting with outer medicine.
>
> Inner medicine is non-doing *(wúwéi),* yet there is nothing that is not done *(wúbùwéi).* Outer medicine is doing *(yǒuwéi),* and there are various ways of doing it.
>
> *Lǐ Dàochún, Zhōnghé jí, DZ249, JY226*

Lǐ Dàochún concludes with a summary of Daoist spiritual practice. Using concepts that are prevalent in *nèidān* (inner alchemy) and Chinese Traditional Medicine, he speaks of the need to transmute vital force or essence *(jīng)* into subtle life energy *(qì),* and energy into spirit *(shén),* so that the spirit may be free to unite with the *Dào;* whereupon the journey on the path of eternal life

and "return to the Origin" is complete. The transmutation of *jīng* into *qì,* and thence into *shén,* which evolves into the sublime stillness of *xū* (emptiness, void), which merges with the *tàixū* (Great Void), is a standard Daoist way of describing the rediscovery of one's original spiritual nature or the ascent back to the Source, which is *Dào:*

> In regard to the disciples' question … on how to protect body and mind, I say that the key lies in the management of movement *(dòng)* and stillness *(jìng).* This means to collect body and mind by emulating the functions of heaven and earth. To protect the body means to harmonize and adapt (to people and circumstances, *etc.*). To protect the mind means to gather it and draw it within.
>
> To harmonize and adapt, movement *(dòng)* is essential. To gather and draw within, stillness *(jìng)* is essential. Movement *(dòng)* is a reflection of heaven (the creator, the giver). Stillness *(jìng)* is a reflection of earth (the creation, the receiver). When both body and mind are still *(jìng),* heaven and earth are as one.
>
> When utmost stillness *(jìng)* has been attained (*i.e.* in meditation), then true mystical processes automatically begin. But this is not worldly movement *(dòng).* This process of movement *(dòng)* is in the inherent mind *(tiānxīn).* Once the inherent mind *(tiānxīn)* manifests, the mysterious pass *(xuánguān)* appears. The mysterious pass (the transitional point between the physical and the spiritual) is where the (alchemical) furnace, cauldron, and all the medicines lie.… When the practice reaches this stage, body and mind are at one, movement *(dòng)* and stillness *(jìng)* are in balance.
>
> The entire process of the closing and opening of heaven and earth lies within the self. Hence, when the mind returns to the state of emptiness and stillness and the body is in the state of non-doing *(wúwéi),* movement *(dòng)* and stillness *(jìng)* are no longer of any concern.…
>
> At this point, vital essence *(jīng)* naturally transforms into life energy *(qì),* life energy naturally transforms into spirit *(shén),* and spirit naturally transforms into emptiness *(xū)* and is merged with the Great Void *(tàixū)* as one. This is what is called the 'return to the Source', the 'return to the Origin'. Rejoice! The path to eternal life *(chángshēng)* and eternal vision is complete.
>
> *Lǐ Dàochún, Zhōnghé jí, DZ249, JY226*

See also: **xiān** (7.1).

1. Uncertain reference, possibly an allusion to *Dàodé jīng* 51: "The *Dào* gives birth; *dé* nurtures."
2. *Xīshēng jīng* 7, *DZ666, JY84,* in *DZ726* 2:10a–b.

chángshòu (C) *Lit.* longevity; ability to live long; long-lived. See **chángshēng**.

chāotuō (C) *Lit.* to transcend *(chāo)* and escape *(tuō);* to go beyond *(chāo)* and shed, take off, or get away from *(tuō);* hence, to stand aloof, to be detached from, to transcend worldliness; transcendent liberation; hence also, detachment from the world.

Master Yáng Dàoshēng (C15th) explains the meaning in his extensive treatise *Zhēnquán* ('Veritable Truth'), quoting from master Bái Yùchán (C13th):

> Someone may ask about transcendent release *(chāotuō).* The *(Book of) Báiyùchánzǐ* says, "Transcendence *(chāo)* means emergence, that is, emergence of the spirit; escape *(tuō)* means shedding *(tuōhuàn)* the temporal body."
>
> *Yáng Dàoshēng, Zhēnquán, JY244, ZW373*

Later in the text, master Yáng Dàoshēng points out that even if one can ascend to the highest heavens, until one has entered the utterly Formless, one remains subject to *yīn* and *yáng* (duality), trapped in the realm of "energy transformations *(qìhuà)*", and "transcendent liberation *(chāotuō)*" remains elusive:

> Now if even a body subjected to refinement (*i.e.* meditation and purification) is constrained by energy transformations *(qìhuà),* what can be said of the physical body born of parents? Even if you have cultivated and refined yourself to the point where you can ascend to the celestial realms of the Heavenly Dragon *(tiānlóng)* and the Dragon Lord *(dìlóng)* in the Supreme Great Canopy Heaven *(luójuéchángtiān),* you are still in the realm of the transformations of *yīn* and *yáng,* and have yet to enter the Formless. And if you cannot enter the Formless, you cannot avoid being enslaved by *yīn* and *yáng,* and heaven and earth, and you will be unable to attain transcendent liberation *(chāotuō).*
>
> *Yáng Dàoshēng, Zhēnquán, JY244, ZW373*

Master Qiū Chǔjī (C13th) describes transcendence from the perspective of *nèidān,* claiming it to be the one method of *chāotuō* that has never changed throughout all aeons:

> Pure *yángqì* (spiritual energy) is born after vital essence *(jīng)* has been refined and made into an elixir. After you have refined the *qì* and completed the spirit *(shén),* the realized spiritual divine immortal *(zhēnlíng shénxiān)* transcends the ordinary *(chāofán)* and enters the holy *(shèng).* You abandon your shell *(qìqiào)* and ascend to immortality *(shēngxiān).* This is called 'transcending and escaping *(chāotuō)*'.

> This is the method of the divine immortals *(shénxiān)* that has not changed for a hundred million years.
>
> *Qiū Chǔjī, Dàdān zhízhǐ, DZ244 2:8b–9a; cf. in TPEQ pp.93–94*

Master Lǐ Dàochún (C13th) likewise says:

> The emergence of the light spirit *(yángshén)* from the covering *(qiào)* (of the physical body) is referred to as '*tuōtāi* (to shed the body)'. Returning to the Source, recovering life, and reverting to the original Beginning is called 'transcendent liberation *(chāotuō)*'.
>
> *Lǐ Dàochún, Zhōnghé jí, DZ249, JY226*

Spiritual transcendence begins with the ordering of one's material existence. Regardless of location and circumstances, a Daoist leads a life that is centred on his primary goal: the attainment of spiritual immortality. To achieve this, he endeavours to remain detached from worldly affairs by holding firmly to physical and mental calmness. This does not mean abandoning family and social duties; rather he takes part only in what is essential. Aligning himself with the principle of *wúwéi* (non-action; unforced, selfless action), distancing himself from any desire for a particular outcome, and acknowledging that everything should happen 'of itself so *(zìrán)*', he acts only when really necessary. In his *Vegetable Roots Discourses,* master Hóng Zìchéng (C16th) suggests several ways of reducing worldly activity:

> By reducing his activities, a man significantly increases his ability to transcend the mundane world *(chāotuō).* For instance, by narrowing the circle of his friends, he saves himself much to-ing and fro-ing; and by becoming a man of few words, he reduces his chances of making a mistake. By being sparing with his thoughts, he saves wear and tear on his spiritual essence; and by setting less store on cleverness, he can see the undifferentiated whole. Those who do not seek daily to reduce their activities, but instead strive to increase them, are forging manacles for themselves!
>
> *Hóng Zìchéng, Càigēntán 357, CGT; cf. TRW p.357*

chashish (P) *Lit.* taste, savour, delight; mystically, the spiritual delight that comes from the Divine; similar in meaning to *dhawq* (tasting), which is also used in Sufism for the first stage of mystic revelation. Speaking of the spiritual delight that arises from the aspiration to reach God, Rūmī writes that once this delight has been experienced, there will always be a desire to repeat the experience:

> This attraction (to God) comes
> from the same quarter as that delight *(chashish).*
> The eyes of every kind of person
> remain turned in the direction
> where once they satisfied a longing for delight *(źawq).*
> The delight *(źawq)* of every thing
> is undoubtedly in its own kind:
> The delight *(źawq)* of the part, observe,
> is in its whole.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī I:887–89; cf. MJR2 p.50*

Sufis, like mystics everywhere, observe that the soul is a particle of God, and that the part longs for the Whole, for its Source. The longing, taste or delight present within every human being comes from the same source as the spiritual attraction that draws the seeker towards union with God.

See also: **dhawq**.

chéngxiān (C) *Lit.* to become *(chéng)* immortal *(xiān);* to attain or perfect immortality. *Chéng* also means to succeed, finish, complete, accomplish, attain, or perfect.

The term first appears in the Warring States period (475–221 BCE), where it indicates transcendence of the physical body at will, and entrance into an otherworldly state of being:

> With immortality perfected *(chéngxiān),* the spirit *(líng)* – freely able to appear in and disappear from the mundane world – is liberated from its numerous transformations. This is what we call 'going beyond the world'.
>
> *Sūn Sīmiǎo, Cúnshén liànqì míng, DZ834 1b; cf. SSTK p.120*

Master Qiū Chǔjī (C13th) differentiates between "people of the world", who "do not like to cultivate and refine", and the person who "refines his spirit". He also addresses the common belief that physical death automatically ensures spiritual immortality with no prior preparation. Those who are prepared to put in the degree of effort required to rise above the body and attain true immortality are very few:

> Generally speaking, if you have a body, you will experience suffering. If you have no home, you will have no attachments. (Enlightened teachers) of the past and present all agree that arduous effort culminates in non-action (*wúwéi,* selfless action). How can (such a one)

> bear to love his body rather than leave it? Thus, he abandons his shell (*qìqiào, i.e.* dies) and ascends *(shēng)* to immortality *(xiān)* by emerging through the top of his head. Refining his spirit, he transcends the mundane and becomes an immortal *(xiān).*
>
> People of the world do not like to cultivate and refine (themselves spiritually), but merely expect that when they abandon their shells *(qìqiào),* they will attain complete immortality *(chéngxiān).* How mistaken they are!
>
> *Qiū Chǔjī, Dàdān zhízhǐ, DZ244 2:9b; cf. in TPEQ p.94*

Master Liú Yīmíng (1734–1821) adds that there are many who want to accumulate worldly wealth and to attain spiritual immortality, but they do not like the idea of the single-mindedness required for spiritual practice:

> The *Dào* is sublime and mysterious, the vehicle of the great way to transcend the mundane and enter sainthood *(shèng).* Everyone is drawn to the idea of becoming an immortal *(chéngxiān),* but when they hear about the difficulty of the practice, they fall away. They want to hold on tight to their amassed wealth, but also want to soar above the clouds into the ninth heaven! There are people like this all over the world. Has a worthy one (a mystic) ever emerged from among them?
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùdào lù, ZW268, DS18*

See also: **xiān** (7.1).

chetan samādhi (H) *Lit.* spiritual *(chetan)* absorption *(samādhi);* conscious absorption; absorption of consciousness in some inner stage; a term used by Shri Ramakrishna. See **samādhi**.

chintā (S/H/Pu) *Lit.* anxiety, worry, concern, doubt; related to *chintana* (thought, discussion, reflection, speculation).

Worry arises from ignorance – both of oneself and of how the events of life are manifested. The future is unknown and the past cannot be changed. Worry consists either of concern for the future or sadness about the past. Even if a person were to know the future, he could do nothing about it. Worrying about the events of life undermines the capacity for effective action, and in the accompanying mental distraction the spiritual purpose of life is forgotten.

The Indian saint Paltū writes how worry consumes everyone, nobleman or beggar, holy man or ascetic. Only those who come into contact with the divine Word, he says, are saved from an otherwise endless stream of thoughts about the world:

Behold, how the flame of worry *(chintā)*
consumes the whole world;
It consumes the whole world,
affecting the ruler and the ruled alike.
Kings and their satraps burn,
and so too do *shaykhs* and *sayyids.*
Men, gods and sages burn,
the *yogī,* the ascetic, and the recluse all burn.
The erudite, the pedantic and the clever
are all enveloped in its fire.
Jangams (Shaivite renunciates)
and *seorās* (Jain *Shvetāmbara* monks) burn,
nāgas and *udāsīs* (ascetics) burn.
The man in penance doubly burns.
Worry lets none escape.
Saints alone escape,
whose mainstay is the Word.
Behold how the flame of worry *(chintā)*
consumes the whole world.

Paltū, Bānī 1, Kuṇḍalī 231, PSB1 p.96

Other saints have similarly taught that the Name or Word of God and the company of saints removes all worries and concerns:

Repeat the Name of God with love and devotion,
and leave all your worries *(chintā)* to Him!

Eknāth, Eknāthānchi Bhajane 113, EBEP p.86; cf. in SSI4 pp.212–13

Chanting (meditating on) Your Name,
I have obtained supreme peace (*sukh,* bliss),
and my anxieties *(chintā)* and diseases have been cast out.

Guru Arjun, Ādi Granth 529, AGK

I bow again and again to the saints,
the dust of whose feet destroys the offsprings of worry *(chintā)!*

Vallabhāchārya, Chintā-santānahantāro; cf. in SSI5 pp.118–19

I carry your burdens *(chintā)* in my own heart,
so that you may be free of worries *(achint),*
and nurture my love in your heart.

Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 33:16.9, SBP p.275

Sardar Bahadur Jagat Singh has some good advice on dealing with worry:

> Did worry ever help to solve any problem? It is born of confused thinking. Form the habit of clear thinking always and laugh away your troubles and sorrows. Even the devil himself can do nothing to a man so long as he can laugh. Does a laugh cost anything? It is as easy to laugh as to worry and fret. Only a little effort is required in the beginning. It becomes a habit after a time. Your worrying shows that you have no faith in the goodness of God or even in God Himself. Let Him accomplish things in His own way rather than in the way you desire. Try to adjust yourself to all that He does and you will never be unhappy.
>
> *Sardar Bahadur Jagat Singh, Science of the Soul,*
> *A Spiritual Bouquet 19, SOSJ p.189*

See also: **achint**.

chitta-vṛitti (S/H) *Lit.* mode *(vṛitti)* of the mind *(chitta);* generally understood in the plural as waves of the mind; mental inclinations such as memories, desires, feelings, and so on; states, activities, modulations, modifications, transformations, fluctuations, changing conditions or rapid movements or ripples that continuously ruffle the surface of the *chitta* (mind); agitated waves of disturbance on the screen of the mind. Every sense impression that falls upon the mind creates a wave or movement or impression, and likewise, any thought, emotion, or imagining generated from within.

Vṛitti is from the Sanskrit root *vṛit* (to be, to exist), and means a mode of existence. *Chitta* is from the same root as *chit,* which means pure consciousness. It is because the human mind or *antaḥkaraṇa* (inner organ) receives energy from the *chit* that it becomes apparently conscious and intelligent. Without the underlying *chit,* which is the real person, the mind is a dead thing, possessing no power.

Patañjali defines *yoga* as bringing the otherwise ceaseless activity of the *chitta-vṛittis* – the waves of the mind – to a halt:

> *Yoga* is the cessation of the *chitta-vṛittis.*
> Consciousness then exists in its own natural state.
> Otherwise, it identifies with the *vṛittis.*
> The *vṛittis* are fivefold:
> they are either painful *(klishṭa)* or pleasurable *(aklishṭa).*
>
> *Patañjali, Yoga Sūtras 1:2–5*

Those *vṛittis* that are pleasing automatically give rise to attachment *(rāga),* while those that are painful give rise to aversion *(dvesha);* but both leave impressions on the mind that are limiting and binding. Patañjali then goes on

to list five primary modes or fluctuations of the *chitta,*[1] although it is clear that there are also many other mental states and functions:

1. *Pramāṇa.* Perception, cognition, investigation or acquisition of information; the means of acquiring certain, valid or correct knowledge.

2. *Viparyaya.* Misapprehension, misinterpretation or illusion; the means of acquiring invalid or incorrect knowledge.

3. *Vikalpa.* Imagination, conceptualization, opinion, doubt, leading to fancy or speculative knowledge.

4. *Nidrā.* Sleep.

5. *Smṛiti.* Memory.

Since the higher or universal mind is the source of all modifications, waves, fluctuations, transformations and so on, all changes are essentially *vṛittis* of the mind. And the changeless Lord, who is beyond all these, sees them all by virtue of His inherent stillness:

> Due to His changelessness, the waves of the mind *(chitta-vṛittis)* are always known to their Lord, the supreme Being *(Purusha).*
>
> *Patañjali, Yoga Sūtras 4:18*

See also: **antaḥkaraṇa** (5.1), **chitta** (5.1), **chitta** (▸4), **vikalpa**, **viparyaya**, **vṛitti**.

1. Patañjali, *Yoga Sūtras* 1:5–6.

chíyī, **chídào**, **zhíyī**, **zhídào** (C) *Lit.* hold fast *(chí, zhí)* to the One *(yī);* hold fast to the *Dào;* to grasp the One or the *Dào;* in Daoist texts, constant communion with the *Dào,* keeping it close to one's heart, always conscious of its presence; keeping one's attention in the *Dào.*

The *Dào* existed 'before time'; it is self-existent and eternal, beyond time. The *Dàodé jīng* calls it the "ancient *Dào*". Yet, as the essence of all being and existence, the *Dào* is an all-pervading and ever-present support. Therefore, the *Dàodé jīng* counsels:

> Stand before it – there is no beginning,
> follow behind – there is no end.

Hold fast *(zhí)* to the ancient *Dào,*
so as to steer in the world of now.
To know the ancient beginning,
it is to know the thread of *Dào.*
Dàodé jīng 14; cf. TTCC p.89, TTCE p.16

"The thread of *Dào*" is the timeless link, the continuity between eternity and the present, the invisible link between the formless and form, between presence and absence. "To hold fast to the ancient *Dào*" and to know the continual, ever-existent "thread of *Dào*" is to be in touch with eternity in the present moment.

In *Nèiyè* ('Inner Cultivation,' C4th BCE), a collection of verses concerning the practice of inner cultivation, the various authors urge practitioners to "hold fast to the One *(zhíyī)*" and to "never let go". 'Holding fast to the One' means to follow the spiritual path ardently, and to maintain constant awareness of and faith in the all-pervading *Dào.* This helps to free the mind from egotism and wrongful intention, and gives rise to appropriate action whatever the situation. In this way, transformation from the worldly to the heavenly – from darkness to inward illumination – becomes effortless. No longer a victim of circumstances, a practitioner is the master of all situations:

Those who can transform even a single thing –
call them 'spiritual';
Those who can alter even a single situation –
call them 'wise'.

But to transform without expending life energy *(qì),*
to alter without expending wisdom:
Only virtuous people *(jūnzǐ)* who hold fast to the One *(zhíyī),*
are able to do this.

Hold fast to the One *(zhíyī)* – never let go,
and you will be able to master the myriad things *(wànwù).*
Virtuous people *(jūnzǐ)* act upon things,
and are not acted upon by them.
They have attained the nature of the One *(yī)*
by controlling the mind *(zhìxīn)* at the centre.
Nèiyè, in Guǎnzǐ (49) 16:3b; cf. OTIT (9:1–9) p.62

The *Nèiyè,* included as chapter forty-nine of the *Guǎnzǐ,* is regarded as a significant Daoist text. It is possibly the oldest mystical text in China and the

one that most closely parallels the *Dàodé jīng* (*c.*C3rd BCE) in both literary form and philosophical content.[1]

1. A.C. Graham, *Disputers of the Tao, DTPG* p.100.

chìzǐ (C) *Lit.* naked *(chì)* child *(zǐ);* a newborn baby; a Daoist image symbolizing the simplicity and purity of one's original, innate, or true nature *(xìng),* and hence also of the original spirit *(yuánshén).*

Man's original nature is the *Dào.* Similarly, the origin of the 'individual' spirit in man is the *Dào.* However, as human beings live out their lives on the physical plane, they become increasingly conditioned by external influences, due particularly to a fondness for pleasure derived through the senses. The result is that the pure and simple original nature or original spirit, which is already hidden, becomes increasingly concealed.

The Daoist seeks to uncover this hidden spirit and reunite it with its Source *(Dào).* To do this requires a return to the simplicity and purity of one's original nature, as exemplified by a newborn babe. The original nature of the spirit itself is already pure and simple; it is the human mind that needs to be simplified and purified as an essential part of this process. The result is that the purified and simplified spirit will forever thereafter bathe in the ultimate simplicity and purity of the *Dào:*

> He who is profound *(hòu)* in character *(dé)*
> is like a newborn babe *(chìzǐ).*
> No poisonous insects sting him,
> no wild beasts attack him,
> no birds of prey pounce upon him.
> His bones are soft and his sinews tender,
> yet his grip is strong.
> He knows not the union of male and female,
> yet his organs are complete –
> meaning that his vitality is unblemished.
> He cries the whole day, yet his voice never becomes hoarse –
> meaning that his (natural) harmony is perfect.
>
> *Dàodé jīng 55; cf. WLT p.252*

The literal meaning of *hòu* (profound) is 'heavy' or 'thick'. According to the translator Lin Yutang, 'heaviness *(zhòng)*' and 'thickness *(hòu)*' of character have positive associations in Chinese with good fortune and endurance. 'Thinness' and 'lightness' of character, on the other hand, have negative associations with frivolity and a deficiency of good fortune.[1] The natural protection of a baby from insects, birds and animals is perhaps folklore, but

there are certainly records of wild animals protecting human beings – infant and adult – from imminent danger.

See also: **pǔ**, **sù**, **yīng'ér**, **zìrán**.

1. See Lin Yutang, *Wisdom of Laotse, WLT* p.153 (n.1) and p.252 (n.12); see also *Dàodé jīng* 26.

chūshén (C) *Lit.* going out *(chū)* + spirit *(shén);* in Daoist ritual, often rendered as 'externalization of the spirits'; in *nèidān* (inner alchemy), 'exit of the spirit' from the body and its ascent to spiritual realms.

In religious Daoism, *chūshén* is a ritual intended to summon the inner deities from within the body of the officiating *dàoshì* (priest), in order to present them with petitions *(shēnzhuàng).*

In *nèidān* practice, the spirit *(shén)* withdraws *(chū)* through the gate of heaven *(tiānmén)* that 'opens' as a result of spiritual practice. This is also known as 'refining the spirit and returning to emptiness *(liànshén huánxū)*'. According to *nèidān* texts, *chūshén* is heralded by pleasant tastes, sounds resembling thunder, and visions of light. A person who reaches this stage has reunited his spirit *(shén)* with *Dào* and has the same lifespan as *Dào, i.e.* he has become immortal *(xiān).* In this condition the spirit, having recovered its true radiant nature, has the ability to leave the body at will.

Some Daoist texts contain accounts of *chūshén* in which adepts 'send out' their radiant spirit and enter the dreams *(chūshén rùmèng)* of disciples or disciples-to-be. The hagiographic *Illustrated Biographies of the Orthodox Immortal Stream of the Gold Lotus* (C14th),[1] for instance, records that in the twelfth century, Mǎ Yù and his wife Sūn Bù'èr were converted in their dreams by master Wáng Zhé in his spiritual or radiant form.[2] Both subsequently became masters.

See also: **xiàn** (7.2).

1. Liú Zhìxuán and Xiè Xīchán, *Jīnlián xiàngzhuàn, DZ174.*
2. See Liú Zhìxuán and Xiè Xīchán, *Jīnlián xiàngzhuàn, DZ174* 5:9a–b, *JY302,* in *TPEQ* pp.121–22.

citta (Pa) *Lit.* mind, thought, consciousness; one of three overlapping Pali Buddhist terms that refer non-specifically to mind and consciousness, the other two being *manas* and *viññāṇa;* variously understood by different Buddhist schools, which analyse mind and consciousness in a variety of ways; in *Theravāda* Buddhism, expressions, modes and traits of mind and consciousness, as

identified by the *Abhidhamma* (analytical systematization of the Pali *suttas*), together with commentaries on the Pali *suttas* and *Abhidhamma* texts; also, the stages in a sequence of thought moments *(cittakkhaṇa)* that arise in the cognitive or thought process *(citta-vīthi)* which deals with sensory or mental input, according to the *sutta* and *Abhidhamma* commentaries and manuals, such as Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga* ('Path of Purification') and *Aṭṭhasālinī* ('The Expositor'), and the *Abhidhammattha Sangaha* ('Compendium of *Abhidhamma*') of Anuruddha (*c.*C11th–12th).

The *Abhidhamma* texts enumerate multiple *cittas,* covering all aspects of human conduct, motivation and emotion, worldly and transcendental. In this respect, no distinction is made between mind and consciousness. These *cittas,* which the *Abhidhammattha Sangaha* lists as eighty-nine in number, are divided into four overall classes:[1]

1. Fifty-four pertaining to the sphere of the senses *(kāmāvacara* or *kāmaloka).*

2. Fifteen pertaining to the realms of subtle forms, patterns or archetypes *(rūpāvacara* or *rūpaloka),* which relate to the four lower *jhānas* (states of meditative consciousness).

3. Twelve pertaining to the immaterial or formless realms *(arūpāvacara* or *arūpaloka),* which relate to the four higher *jhānas.*

4. Eight pertaining to the transcendental consciousness experienced by those who have entered upon the supramundane *(lokuttara)* path, *viz.* the *sotāpanna* (stream enterer), *sakadāgāmī* (once-returner), *anāgāmī* (non-returner), and *arahanta* (noble one, enlightened one).

Some *cittas* are associated with human emotions, wholesome and unwholesome, such as lovingkindness *(mettā)* and generosity *(dāna),* lust *(rāga),* and ill will *(dvesha), etc.* Some are connected to spiritual ignorance and delusion *(moha),* giving rise to various forms of wrong perspective or viewpoint *(mithyā-diṭṭhi).* Some deal with doubt *(vicikicchā),* the delusion that there is a separate self *(sakkāya-diṭṭhi),* and agitation or over-excitement *(uddhacca).* Several are associated with actions (killing, stealing, sexual misconduct), speech (lying, slandering, hard words, vain talk), and thought (greed, hatred, and wrong viewpoint). Others relate to the higher states of consciousness in *rūpaloka, arūpaloka,* and the supramundane path.

Various other categories are applied to the eighty-nine *cittas,* which generally belong to more than one category. The categories themselves are also subdivided and cross-correlated, and it is the matrix created by the cross-correlation of all these elements that results in the figure of eighty-nine *cittas.*

A more complex matrix results in a figure of one hundred and twenty-one *cittas.* The various categories include:[2]

Akusala-cittas. Unwholesome or immoral *cittas; cittas* arising from attachment or greed *(lobha),* ill will or anger *(paṭigha* or *dosa),* and delusion *(moha),* which are known as the three roots of evil or the three unwholesome roots *(akusala-mūla),* producing undesirable effects *(aniṭṭha-vipāka).* From these arise *lobha-cittas* (*cittas* associated with greed or attachment), *dosa-cittas* (*cittas* associated with anger or aversion), and *moha-cittas* (*cittas* associated with delusion).

Kusala-cittas. Wholesome or moral *cittas; cittas* arising from detachment *(alobha),* good will *(adosa),* and wisdom *(amoha).* These are known as the three roots of goodness or the three wholesome roots *(kusala-mūla),* producing desirable effects *(iṭṭha-vipāka).*

Vipāka-cittas. Resultant *cittas; cittas* arising as the inevitable result of past *cittas* and *kamma,* which may be wholesome or unwholesome, giving rise to the categories of *kusala-vipāka-cittas* and *akusala-vipāka-cittas.* These *kammas* and *vipākas* are entirely mental.

Kiriyā-cittas. Inoperative, purely functional *cittas; cittas* that are karmically ineffective, producing no *kamma.*

Ahetuka kiriyā-citta. Groundless, causeless or rootless *(ahetu)* inoperative *cittas,* of which there are three kinds. Firstly, there is the *citta* of involuntarily turning the attention towards an incoming sense impression in the thought process *(citta-vīthi)* by which such impressions are brought to conscious awareness. Since the cause of the *citta* is external to the mind, the *citta* is regarded as 'rootless'. This turning of the attention to the five senses is designated five-door turning of the attention *(pañca-dvārāvajjana),* and represents the initial impact of an incoming sensory impression. Some forms of mental input also come into the category of *kiriyā-citta,* and are correspondingly named mind-door turning of the attention *(mano-dvārāvajjana).* These two are the only kinds of *kiriyā-citta* experienced by an ordinary person; the remainder are the province of *buddhas* and *arahantas* alone. Among these, there is a third kind of *ahetuka kiriyā-citta* – the *hasituppāda-citta* (smile-producing *citta*), which is unique to enlightened beings.

Somanassa-cittas. Pleasurable *cittas;* mental feelings of pleasure about something.

Domanassa-cittas. Unpleasurable *cittas;* unpleasurable mental feelings concerning something.

Upekkhā-cittas. Neutral *cittas;* feelings that are neither pleasurable nor unpleasurable.

Sukha-citta. The physical feeling of happiness and comfort.

Dukkha-citta. The physical feeling of pain.

Sobhana-cittas. Morally beautiful *cittas; cittas* founded on good motivations.

Asobhana-cittas. Morally unbeautiful *cittas; cittas* founded on bad motivations.

Diṭṭhigata-sampayutta-cittas. Cittas associated *(sampayutta)* with wrong beliefs or views *(diṭṭhigata); cittas* that arise from a wrong view of things.

Diṭṭhigata-vippayutta-cittas. Cittas unconnected with *(vippayutta)* wrong beliefs or views; *cittas* that arise in the absence of a wrong view.

Ñāṇa-sampayutta-cittas. Cittas associated with wisdom *(ñāṇa).*

Ñāṇa-vippayutta-cittas. Cittas unconnected with wisdom.

Sasankhārika-cittas. Induced *cittas; cittas* prompted by prior deliberation, which may have originated from one's own volition and effort or from the instigation, encouragement, or enticement of others.

Asankhārika-cittas. Spontaneous *cittas; cittas* that arise without deliberation, preparation, premeditation or inducement, either of oneself or others.

The combined forms of these categories of *citta* give rise to the eighty-nine or one hundred and twenty-one *cittas.* Thus, there are *cittas* such as *somanassa-sahagataṃ ñāṇa-sampayuttaṃ asankhārikaṃ ekam* (accompanied by pleasant feeling, with wisdom, unprompted), *somanassa-sahagataṃ ñāṇa-vippayuttaṃ sasankhārikaṃ ekam* (accompanied by pleasant feeling, without wisdom, prompted), and similar compound categories.

Because the thought processes *(citta-vīthi),* thought moments *(cittakkhaṇa, citta)* and *javana-cittas* of an *arahanta* or *buddha* function independently of

the kammic process, he creates no *kamma.* An *arahanta*'s thought moments are therefore known as *kiriyā* (functional, inoperative) *cittas* or *javanas* (impulses), since they possess no kammic force and create no new *kamma.* Because *arahantas* and other enlightened beings do not accumulate *kamma,* they experience neither *kusala-cittas* (wholesome *cittas*) nor *akusala-cittas* (unwholesome *cittas*). In their instance, *kusala-cittas* are replaced by *kiriyā-cittas,* which may be *sobhana kiriyā-citta* (beautiful inoperative *citta*) or *ahetuka kiriyā-citta* (groundless, rootless, or causeless inoperative *citta*).

Fifty-two additional states of mind are also enumerated, which form a further analysis of the *cittas.* These *cetasikas* (mental factors), as they are called, relate to the same object of thought as their 'host' *citta,* and colour the *citta* accordingly, defining its character as wholesome, unwholesome, or neutral.

See also: **cetasika**, **chitta** (▸1), **cittakkhaṇa**, **hasituppāda-citta**.

1. See Sayadaw U Thittila, *Essential Themes of Buddhist Lectures, ETBL* pp.263–67.
2. See Nārada Mahāthera, *A Manual of Abhidhamma, ASAM* pp.16–93.

cittakkhaṇa (Pa) *Lit.* thought *(citta)* moment *(khaṇa);* consciousness *(citta)* moment; one of a number of infinitesimally short 'stages' or moments in a perceptual, cognitive, or thought process *(citta-vīthi);* often abbreviated to *citta,* where the context makes the meaning clear; described as possessing three stages: arising *(uppāda),* existing or continuing *(tithi),* and disappearing *(bhanga),* although there are no divisions either within or between the thought moments – everything is understood as one continuous mental stream.

The overall concept is briefly acknowledged in the canonical *Abhidhamma* (in the *Paṭṭhāna*), but is first elaborated in the scholarly commentaries to the Pali Buddhist *suttas.* It is further described in commentaries and manuals – such as Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga* ('Path of Purification') and *Aṭṭhasālinī* ('The Expositor') – and is summarized in the *Abhidhamma* manuals of Buddhadatta and Anuruddha.

According to this model, consciousness *(citta, viññāṇa)* arises in response to external or internal stimuli entering the six doors – the five sense doors and the one mind door. In this context, 'mind' refers to the facet of the mind that receives the object after its perception by the senses. It is the mental or conscious aspect of perception without which consciousness of sensory objects does not arise. In the absence of any stimuli, the consciousness remains in a passive state known as the *bhavanga-sota* (life stream, life continuum), which is the unconscious continuity factor or 'consciousness continuum' by which the individual maintains a sense of his continuous existence and retains impressions or memories of experience. It is essentially the blank tablet of the

mind upon which are written the other thought moments with which life is filled, the substratum upon which life's experiences play out. It is the vacant state of deep dreamless sleep in which consciousness is modified by external or internal stimuli. The *bhavanga-sota,* often abbreviated to *bhavanga,* flows steadily like a stream throughout life, from conception to death. Thought processes are initiated by incoming objects or stimuli – things that enter one of the five sense doors or the sixth mind door.

Seventeen thought moments are described as comprising a normal thought process:[1]

1. *Bhavanga-atīta. Lit.* past *(atīta) bhavanga;* the state of the undisturbed 'unconscious consciousness' before an external stimulus has made an impression, as in the case of the consciousness of someone in deep sleep who does not respond to external stimuli; also, notionally, the brief interval between one conscious thought and the next.

2. *Bhavanga-calana. Lit.* movement *(calana)* of the *bhavanga;* the vibration, agitation or trembling of the *bhavanga* caused by the stimulus of an external sense object, like a sound that disturbs the consciousness of a person in deep sleep; the mental vibration that registers the incoming stimulus; the first thought moment *(chitta)* that arises when an incoming stimulus falls upon a sense organ and initiates the sequence of thought moments.

3. *Bhavanga-upaccheda. Lit.* arrest *(upaccheda)* of the *bhavanga;* the stopping of the continuous stream of the *bhavanga,* initiating the process by which the incoming stimulus is cognized.

4. *Pañca-dvārāvajjana. Lit.* five-door *(pañca-dvāra)* advertence *(āvajjana);* turning of the attention towards the sensory source of the stimulus, either seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, or touching. For a sleeping person, his slumber has been disturbed, but at this stage he is unaware of the cause. The thought moments up to this point have been compared to a spider in the centre of its web. To begin with, the spider is at rest; then it feels a vibration when an insect is caught in the web, and it becomes alert; it then turns its attention towards the source of the disturbance. That is *pañca-dvārāvajjana.*

In the case of a mental stimulus *(mano-dvārāvajjana),* the incoming thought requires no sensory evaluation, and the sequence of thought moments proceed directly to the ninth thought moment, that of *javana.*

5. *Pañca-viññāṇa. Lit.* fivefold *(pañca)* consciousness *(viññāṇa);* arousal of the particular consciousness associated with the sense organ that has received the stimulus. These are designated as *cakkhu-viññāṇa* (sight consciousness), *sota-viññāṇa* (hearing consciousness), and so on.

6. *Sampaṭicchana-citta. Lit.* receiving thought moment; the thought moment in which the sensory impression caused by the external stimulus is received by the particular sensory consciousness.

7. *Santīraṇa-citta. Lit.* investigating thought moment; discriminative examination of the sense impression.

8. *Votthapana-citta. Lit.* determining thought moment; the moment in which a decision is made concerning the investigated sense impression. Up to this point, the processes have been entirely automatic, unconscious and lightning fast, the individual remaining unaware of the activity. This is basically the filtering process that goes on continually in the waking state. Of the vast number of sensory impressions received and the thoughts that pass fleetingly through the mind, only a few are brought into the conscious awareness of the individual.

9–15. *Javana-citta. Lit.* thought impulses *(javana).* The incoming sensory impression now moves into the sphere of conscious awareness. *Javana* comes from the verb *javati* (to run, to hasten, to impel, to incite), and *javana* implies both impulse and swift understanding. In fact, there are said to be seven fleeting thought moments or *javanas* that run in swift succession with regard to a single sense impression, bringing with them full awareness of the stimulus or sense object. This is the climax of the thought process *(citta-vīthi),* the stage of maximum cognition. The individual is now fully aware of the sense object and all its implications.

This is the stage at which the object or stimulus is fully recognized and experienced, and decisions made as to a reaction or response, if any. It can be understood as internal consideration followed by action. It is also the stage in which there is an element of free will. Up to this point, the processing of the stimulus has been automatic, reflex and unconscious, without the individual's awareness. Now the stage has been entered in which wholesome *(kusala)* or unwholesome *(akusala)* self-willed reactions or responses can take place, and wholesome or unwholesome *kamma* (S. *karma*) can be created. The degree of free will, however, is conditioned, not absolute. The reactions and responses that take place depend upon the prevailing mindset or mental content of the perceiver – upon whether they have wholesome or unwholesome roots, which itself depends upon past *kamma.* Because it is at this stage that the decision between good and evil is determined by the individual's conditioned mindset, and good or bad *kamma* is created, *javana* thought moments or consciousnesses are of great significance.

16–17. *Tadālambana-citta* or *tadārammaṇa-citta. Lit.* that *(ta)* sense object *(ālambana, ārammaṇa)* thought moment. These two thought moments

represent the dying embers of the thought process. The main functions of cognition and action have passed, and consciousness now momentarily recalls the experience as it dies away. If little impression has been made upon the consciousness, then these thought moments do not occur.

Commentators have illustrated the seventeen thought moments with the example of a sleeping man and a falling mango. A man is sleeping beneath a mango tree with a shawl over his head. A breeze arises and shakes the boughs of the tree, with the result that a mango falls to the ground beside the sleeping man. Aroused by the sound of the falling fruit, the man awakens and sees the fallen mango. He picks it up, examines it, and decides that it is good to eat. He eats it, and after swallowing the last morsels, puts the shawl back over his head and resumes his sleep.

The man's sleep represents the unconscious *bhavanga-atīta,* flowing smoothly without disturbance. The breeze that ruffles the branches of the tree is the *bhavanga-calana,* the vibration that causes the initial disturbance. The falling of the mango signifies the *bhavanga-upaccheda,* the arrest of the continuous flow of the *bhavanga.* The man's awakening and the arousal of his attention through the five sense doors is the *pañca-dvārāvajjana.* Removal of the shawl and use of the eyes to observe the mango is *cakkhu-viññāṇa,* the awakening of sight consciousness, one of the five forms of sensory consciousness comprising the *pañca-viññāṇa.* Picking up the fruit is *sampaṭicchana-citta,* reception of the stimulus. Examining it is *santīraṇa-citta,* investigation of the stimulus. Discovering its desirability is *votthapana-citta,* the decision regarding what to do about the stimulus. Eating the fruit is covered by the seven *javanas,* and swallowing the last morsels is the final act, representing *tadālambana-citta.* Replacing the shawl over his head represents resumption of the smooth flow of the *bhavanga-citta.*

The process as described is simplistic and presumes that sense impressions arrive one at a time. This is manifestly not so. In reality, a multitude of thought processes are continually active. Moreover, a strong sense impression is likely to give rise to a mental stimulus *(mano-dvārāvajjana).* In this way, the mind in the waking state is continuously filled with a multiplicity of thought processes, originating in both the sensory and mental fields.

Abhidhamma texts similarly analyse into a sequence of thought moments the thought process associated with dying. According to the *sutta* commentaries, in a dying person the background *bhavanga-atīta* is disturbed and arrested by the mental stimulus of one of three kinds of near-death or death-proximate *kamma (maraṇāsanna-kamma).* These are mental images or strong memories that epitomize the life just lived or symbolize the life to come. The mental stimulus results in *mano-dvārāvajjana,* turning of the attention towards a mental stimulus, which leads on to near-death *javanas*

or thought impulses known as *maraṇāsanna-javana-citta* (death-proximate *javana* thought moments). This is followed by the *tadālambana-citta,* which registers the experience, and the culminating *cuti-citta* (departing thought moment), which is the final thought moment of the present life.

At the end of one lifetime and the beginning of the next, the consciousness of the former is linked to the latter as it passes from *cuti-citta* (departing thought moment) to *paṭisandhi-citta* (rebirth-linking thought moment). One life ends with the passing of the *cuti-citta* and the next life starts at the moment the new *paṭisandhi-citta* arises. The only exception is the death of an *arahanta* (noble one, enlightened one), whose *cuti-citta* is not followed by a *paṭisandhi-citta.*

This sequence of mental events, together with an analysis of the multiple *cittas* and other facets of mind and consciousness, are minutely scrutinized and examined in the *sutta* commentaries, the *Abhidhamma,* and associated texts, with variations between the different schools.

See also: **āvaǰǰana**, **bhavanga**, **chitta** (▸1), **citta**, **death and rebirth in Theravāda Buddhism** (8.3), **viññāṇa-kicca** (▸1).

1. For this summary, see V. F. Gunaratna, *Rebirth Explained, WH167* pp.21–24; Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 14:115–24, *PTSV* pp.458–60.

citta-vīthi (Pa) *Lit.* mind *(citta)* course *(vīthi);* continuous course of thoughts, thought process, process of consciousness; the sequence of thought moments *(cittakkhaṇa)* comprising a perceptual, cognitive or thought process by which a sensory or mental input arises in consciousness; a concept that first appears in rudimentary form in the canonical *Abhidhamma* texts (in the *Paṭṭhāna*), is elaborated in the later commentaries and manuals, such as Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga* ('Path of Purification')[1] and *Aṭṭhasālinī* ('The Expositor'), and is summarized in the *Abhidhamma* manuals of Buddhadatta and Anuruddha. The sequence of thought moments is also called *viññāṇa-kicca* (functions of consciousness); See **cittakkhaṇa**.

1. Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 14:115–24, *PTSV* pp.458–60.

cloud of forgetting A 'veil' of forgetfulness of the world and all created things that envelops a soul when in deep contemplation; the forgetfulness of the world that accompanies deep interior focus upon and love for the Divine; the 'cloud' by which thought, memory, imagination, and all the mental faculties associated with remembrance of material life are shrouded or forgotten by a soul rapt in deep inner contemplation.

The expression was coined by the anonymous author of the *Cloud of Unknowing*. The cloud of unknowing is the inner veil of darkness, experienced in contemplative prayer, which lies between the soul and God. It envelops the soul in a focused awareness of its own being and the presence of God, and the soul becomes aware of its own lack of understanding concerning the nature of God. In order that the soul may become entirely absorbed in the cloud of unknowing, the author counsels placing a cloud of forgetting between the soul and the world. Since every thought that passes through the mind has its effect, at the time of contemplation, all thoughts of whatever kind must be trampled down and hidden under the cloud of forgetting:

> If you are ever to come to this cloud of unknowing, to dwell and work in it, as I urge you, then just as this cloud is, so to speak, above you – between your God and you – so must you also put a cloud of forgetting beneath you, between yourself and all creatures ever made. This cloud of unknowing between yourself and God may make you feel that you are very far from Him. But surely it would be more accurate to say that you are much further from Him when there is no cloud of forgetting between you and all creatures ever made. Whenever I say 'all creatures ever made', I always mean not only the individual creatures themselves, but also all their activities and circumstances. There is no exception whatsoever, whether you think of them as bodily or as spiritual beings, or of their activities and circumstances, whether good or bad. In a word, everything must be hidden under this cloud of forgetting.
>
> For although it is sometimes useful to consider the activities and circumstances of particular people and other creatures – what they are and what they do – to do so during this work is virtually useless. Thinking and remembering about what something is or does has a spiritual effect, for the eye of your soul opens and focuses upon it, just as a marksman fixes his eye upon his target. And I tell you this: everything you think about, all the time you think about it, is an obstacle between you and God. And you are that much further from God if any thing but God is in your mind. . . .
>
> This is why I urge you to suppress every subtle or insidious thought. Cover it in a thick cloud of forgetting, even when it is seemingly holy and promises well to help you attain your goal; because in this life only love can reach up to God Himself, not knowledge.
>
> *Cloud of Unknowing 5, 8; cf. CU pp.45, 51, CUCW pp.66–67, 73, CUEU pp.74–75, 88*

Throughout his book, the author advises inculcating "a naked intention directed towards God, and a desire for Him alone". This, he says, "is wholly

sufficient".[1] And to be the better able to "beat upon" the "cloud and the darkness", and – during contemplation – to "subdue all manner of thought beneath the cloud of forgetting", he advises choosing a single word such as 'love' or 'God' to serve as a focus for the mind. This word, when repeated, will drive away all other thoughts and "meditations", even those concerning spirituality that are useful and inspiring at other times:

> If you want this intention enfolded in one word that the mind can more easily hold onto, take a short, one-syllable word such as 'God' or 'love'. The simpler the word the better, being more like the working of the Spirit. But choose whatever word you like, or perhaps some other, so long as it is of one syllable and is meaningful to you. And fix this word in your mind so that it is always there, come what may. It will be your defence in conflict and in peace. With this word, beat upon the cloud and the darkness above you. With this word, subdue all manner of thought beneath the cloud of forgetting. So much so that if ever you are tempted to think what it is that you are seeking, this one word will be sufficient answer. And if your mind goes on to intellectualize over the meaning and connotations of that one word, remind yourself that its value lies in its simplicity. If you do this, then those thoughts will surely go. Why? Because you refuse to let it feed upon the meditations we spoke of earlier.
>
> *Cloud of Unknowing 7; cf. CU p.48, CUCW pp.69–70, CUEU pp.81–82*

The practice, he says, is a "struggle" because it entails ridding the mind of everything other than the "naked intention" towards God:

> Where then is the struggle? Without doubt, the unrelenting struggle lies in stamping out all remembrance of God's creation, and in keeping such thoughts covered by that cloud of forgetting we spoke of earlier. This is no doubt a struggle – but it is our struggle, aided by the grace of God; and the stirring of love, which we mentioned earlier, is wholly God's work. So you do your part, and I promise you that He will not fail in His. . . .
>
> If memories of past deeds should keep coming between yourself and God, or any new thought or sinful impulse, you should resolutely trample them under foot and step beyond them, because of your fervent love for God. Try to cover them with the thick cloud of forgetting, as though neither you nor anyone else had ever committed them. And if they persist in returning, you should persist in rejecting them. In short, as often as they rise up, you must push them down.
>
> *Cloud of Unknowing 26, 31; cf. CU p.73, 77, CUCW pp.94, 97–98, CUEU p.139, 147*

In fact, even the thought of one's self should be cast into this cloud of forgetting:

> See to it that there is nothing at work in your mind or will other than God. Try to suppress all knowledge and feeling of anything less than God, and trample it down deep under the cloud of forgetting. You must understand that in this work you are to forget not only all things other than yourself (and their doings and your own), but also to forget yourself and even the things you have done for the sake of God. For it is the way of the perfect lover not only to love the object of his love more than himself, but also in some way to become oblivious of himself for the sake of what he loves.
>
> And this is what you must learn to do. You must loathe and be weary of all that goes on in your mind and your will unless it be of God. For otherwise, whatever it is will surely be between you and God.
>
> *Cloud of Unknowing 43; cf. CU p.92, CUCW pp.110–11, CUEU p.178*

See also: **cloud of unknowing**, **vigilance**.

1. *Cloud of Unknowing* 7; *cf. CUCW* p.69.

cloud of unknowing A term thought to have been coined by an anonymous English mystic of the late fourteenth century, whose best-known work bears that title; the inner veil of darkness that lies between the soul and God, which envelops the soul in a focused awareness of its own being and the presence of God, and in which the soul is aware of its own 'unknowing' or lack of understanding concerning the nature of God; the inner darkness and awareness in which the mind is stilled – imagination, memory, intellect and so on being held in abeyance by inner concentration and longing for God; a state of being which is experienced during contemplative prayer.

Focused in this darkness, the spiritual self is aware only of its own being and the presence of the Divine. The world is temporarily forgotten, and nothing is known by the normal processes of the human mind – neither the nature of God, nor the nature of one's own being. Even so, the soul understands in a manner that transcends normal human understanding.

In this state, the soul can only remain focused in the darkness, and reach out to God through yearning, with a "simple naked intent":

> When you first begin, you find only darkness or, as it were, a cloud of unknowing. You know not what this is except that in your will you feel a simple naked intent reaching out towards God. Whatever you do, this

> darkness and this cloud remain between you and God, preventing you from grasping Him by the light of understanding or from experiencing His loving sweetness in your affection. Reconcile yourself to wait in this darkness as long as is necessary, constantly longing for Him whom you love. For if you are ever to feel God or to see Him in this life, it is essential for you to remain always in this cloud, in this darkness. And if you will work hard at what I tell you, I believe that through God's mercy you will achieve this very thing.
>
> *Cloud of Unknowing 3; cf. CU pp.40–41, CUCW pp.62–63, CUEU p.63*

The author continues by explaining that this darkness is not a darkness such as is seen by the outer eye when there is no light, but a darkness of "unknowing", a focus of inward attention in which the soul is directly conscious of its ignorance of the nature of both itself and God:

> Do not suppose that because I call it a darkness or a cloud, it is the sort of cloud you see in the sky or the kind of darkness you know at home when the candle is out. . . . By darkness, I mean a lack of knowing – just as anything that you do not know or may have forgotten may be said to be dark to you, for you cannot see it with your inner eye. For this reason, it is called a cloud, not of the sky, but of unknowing – a cloud of unknowing between you and your God.
>
> *Cloud of Unknowing 4; cf. CU pp.44–45, CUCW p.66, CUEU pp.72–73*

He goes on to advise, "Think about Him as He is,"[1] adding:

> But now you will ask me, "How am I to think of God Himself and what He is?" and to this I have no reply except to say, "I do not know!" For with this question you have brought me into that same darkness, and into that same cloud of unknowing where I want you to be!
>
> *Cloud of Unknowing 6; cf. CU p.46, CUCW p.67, CUEU p.77*

Having admitted that he cannot say what God is, he adds that he does know that God cannot be apprehended by thought. Nonetheless, He can be loved. Therefore, he continues:

> Though it may be good sometimes to think particularly about God's majesty and kindness, and though it may be as a light and a part of meditation, yet in the work of contemplation now before us, it must be put aside and covered over with a cloud of forgetting. And you are to step over it resolutely and eagerly, with a devout and pleasing kindling of love, and try to penetrate the darkness that is above you. Beat upon

> that thick cloud of unknowing with the sharp dart of longing love, and do not give up, come what may.
>
> *Cloud of Unknowing 6; cf. CU p.46, CUCW pp.67–68, CUEU pp.77–78*

Although charitable deeds, service to others, consideration of God's mercies, joy at the wonders of creation and so on, are a part of the spiritual life, he emphasizes that however holy and commendable they may seem:

> It is … improper and a handicap for a man who should be working in this divine darkness and in this cloud of unknowing – whose love is moving out to God Himself – to let any thought of or meditation on God's wonderful gifts, or kindness, or any of His created works, physical or spiritual, to come between himself and God – however pleasant or inspiring those thoughts may be.
>
> *Cloud of Unknowing 8; cf. CU p.51, CUCW pp.72–73, CUEU pp.87–88*

The highest form of contemplation, he maintains, is to dwell in this cloud of unknowing. In fact, in this life, he does not believe it possible to go any higher:

> The higher part of contemplation – inasmuch as we know it in this life – is wholly caught up in darkness and in this cloud of unknowing, with a burning love and a blind awareness of the naked being of God Himself and Him alone.… It is this work that a soul should labour at all his life, even those who are innocent of grave sin, for all the while that a soul is living in this mortal body, he will experience the obstruction of this cloud of unknowing between himself and God.
>
> *Cloud of Unknowing 8, 28; cf. CU pp.50, 75, CUCW pp.72, 96, CUEU pp.86–87, 143–44*

Nevertheless, he advises, work hard and never give up. To begin with, it is difficult, but later "when you have devotion", contemplation becomes easier, and there may be times when God will pierce the darkness with an encouraging shaft of His light:

> So if you are to stand and not fall, never relinquish your firm intention. Beat ceaselessly at this cloud of unknowing that is between you and God with the sharp dart of love and longing. Spurn the thought of anything less than God, and let nothing whatever distract you from this purpose.…
>
> Work hard at it, and with all speed; beat upon this high cloud of unknowing, and take your rest later! It is hard work and no mistake for he who would enter upon this work, very hard work indeed, unless it is

made easier by special grace or else because he has grown accustomed to it over a long period.

But in what sense is it hard work? Clearly not in the devout and fervent love that continually springs up in his will, for that is not an urge produced automatically but by the hand of almighty God – who is always ready to bring this about in every soul that is so disposed, and who is doing, and has done for a long time, all he can to equip himself for this work.

Where then is the struggle? Without doubt, the unrelenting struggle lies in stamping out all remembrance of God's creation, and in keeping such thoughts covered by that cloud of forgetting we spoke of earlier. This is no doubt a struggle – but it is our struggle, aided by the grace of God; and the stirring of love, which we mentioned earlier, is wholly God's work. So you do your part and I promise you that He will not fail in His.

Work away then, with all speed! Let me see how you stand up to it. Can you not see Him waiting patiently for you? Shame on you! Work hard for a little while, and soon you will find that the enormity and difficulty of this work will begin to ease. Though it is hard and constraining in the beginning when you have no devotion, later, when you have devotion, what was previously very hard becomes much lighter and entirely restful for you. You may even have to make little or no effort; for sometimes God will do it all Himself. But not always, and never for any length of time, but when He likes, and as He likes; and at those times you will be happy to let Him have His own way.

At such times He may, perhaps, send out a beam of spiritual light, which pierces this cloud of unknowing between you and Him, and shows you some of His secrets, of which it is not permissible or possible to speak.[2] Then will you feel your affection inflamed with the fire of His love, far more than I can possibly tell you – or may or will tell you at this time. For I dare not take upon myself with my blabbering, earthly tongue to speak of that work which belongs solely to God.

Cloud of Unknowing 12, 26; cf. CU pp.55, 73–74, CUCW pp.76–77, 94–95, CUEU pp.94, 138–40

Since reading about this seemingly simple practice might inspire some people to try it for themselves, the writer of the *Cloud of Unknowing* observes that, without adequate guidance, the practice is not advisable, for a person may become a victim of his own mental imaginings:

There will be those who hear or read about this work and, thinking it to be fundamentally an activity of the mind, will proceed to work

> upon it in their minds. But by such curiosity, they will generate an experience that is contrary to nature and will adopt a kind of false practice that is neither spiritual nor physical. Truly, such a person is dangerously deceived. So much so, that unless God in His great goodness intervenes with a miracle of mercy and makes him stop and submit to the counsel of proven practitioners, he will suffer mental aberrations, or suffer some other dreadful form of spiritual mischief and devilish deceit. Indeed, he risks the loss of both body and soul eternally. So for the love of God be careful in this work, and do not attempt to achieve this experience by intellect or in imagination. For I tell you truly, you will not succeed this way. So leave it alone.
>
> *Cloud of Unknowing 4; cf. CU p.44, CUCW pp.65–66, CUEU pp.71–72*

As an expression, the 'cloud of unknowing' arose from the writings of the unknown Syrian monk (*c.*500) who wrote the treatises he attributed pseudo-epigraphically to Dionysius the Areopagite. The writer of the *Cloud of Unknowing* admits his debt to Dionysius:

> That is why St Dionysius said "the most godlike knowledge of God is that which is known by unknowing". Indeed, anyone who looks in Dionysius' books will find that his words will clearly confirm everything I have said, or will yet say, from start to finish. Otherwise I would not bother to quote him now, or any other authority either.
>
> *Cloud of Unknowing 70; cf. CU p.127, CUCW p.145, CUEU p.256*

As the same author, writing again about the "work of contemplation", says in another treatise:

> It is the cloud of unknowing; … it is Dionysius' mystical theology, … his luminous darkness, and his unknowing knowing. It is this that establishes you in a silence beyond thought and words; it is this that makes your prayer so concentrated; and it is this that teaches you to forsake and despise the world.
>
> *Book of Privy Counselling 7; cf. CU (11) p.158, CUCW p.181, LPD p.47*

Nevertheless, the identification of the cloud of unknowing with the "divine darkness" or "mystical theology" of Dionysius seems inaccurate. Elsewhere in his *Mystical Theology,* Dionysius describes how, "by unceasing and absolute withdrawal from yourself and all things", the soul is "borne upwards to the radiance of the divine darkness *(theiou skotous aktis)* that lies beyond all being".[3] In Dionysius' symbolism, God Himself is the "divine darkness" and "luminous darkness". The cloud of unknowing, however, is a barrier of inner darkness to be pierced or broken down on the soul's ascent to God.

See also: **cloud of forgetting**, **dark night**, **divine darkness**, **mystical theology**.

1. *Cloud of Unknowing* 5, *CUCW* p.67.
2. *Cf. 2 Corinthians* 12:3.
3. Pseudo-Dionysius, *Mystical Theology* 1:1; *cf.* in *CU* p.25, *DNMT* p.192, *JTPM* p.239.

comfort (spiritual) A state of spiritual joy and well-being; a state of grace; an experience of bliss, ecstasy, love, or devotion that refreshes the soul; inner sweetness, tenderness and feelings of devotion, sometimes accompanied by tears and deep sighs, often felt in the body as well as in the soul; spiritual solace, consolation or refreshment, often understood as encouragement to persevere on the spiritual path; generally regarded as a divine blessing.

The author of the *Cloud of Unknowing* describes spiritual comfort or consolation as a self-evident "foretaste" of the joys of heaven:

> God desires to be served with body and soul, both together, as is right, and He will give man his reward of bliss in both body and soul. And as a foretaste of that reward, He will sometimes enflame the body of His devout servants, here in this life, not once or twice but maybe often, as He likes, and with a sweetness and comfort most wonderful. None of this, however, originates outside, entering into us through the windows of our faculties. It wells up from within, from the abundance of spiritual gladness and true devotion of the soul. Such comfort and such sweetness should not be held suspect. In fact, to put it briefly, I believe that he who experiences it cannot doubt its authenticity.
>
> *Cloud of Unknowing 48; cf. CU p.98, CUCW pp.117–18, CUEU pp.193–94*

Essentially, spiritual comfort is a reflection of divine love. It is this inner sweetness and comfort, as Walter Hilton observes, that enables a person to forget all outer things, even physical pain and distress:

> Divine love … opens the eyes of the soul to the vision of God, and strengthens it with the joys of love that it experiences in that vision. It brings such comfort to a man's soul that he has no cares, and is unaffected by anything that people may do or say against him.… But when the body is affected and he feels pain, it affects him more deeply and becomes harder. Yet although it is difficult or impossible for the frail nature of man to endure physical suffering gladly and patiently, without bitterness, anger or depression, it is not impossible for divine

> love, that is the Holy Spirit, to bring this about in a soul when he grants it the precious gift of himself. To one in distress, he grants the mighty experience of his love, and unites it to himself in a wonderful manner. By his great power, he withdraws it from the influence of the outward senses, and bestows such sweet comfort on the soul by his sacred presence that it is aware of little or no bodily pain.
>
> *Walter Hilton, Ladder of Perfection 2:38, LPH p.217*

It is this spiritual comfort – to a greater or lesser degree – that sustains spiritual practice. Without it, the mind will "quickly run out again":

> If a man came home to his house and found nothing but a smoking fire and a nagging wife, he would quickly run out again. Similarly, when your soul finds no comfort within itself, but only the black smoke of spiritual blindness and a constant nagging by carnal thoughts which rob it of all peace, it is soon anxious to escape again. This is the darkness of mind.
>
> *Walter Hilton, Ladder of Perfection 1:53, LPH p.65*

Therefore, advises Walter Hilton:

> We should desire always to be conscious – so far as we may – of the lively inspiration of grace brought about by the spiritual presence of God within our souls. We should desire to contemplate Him constantly with reverence, and always to feel the sweetness of His love in the wondrous nearness of His presence.... And this experience is the goal towards which we should direct our lives and exertions, for without it we cannot live the life of the spirit. For just as the soul is the life of the body, God is the life of the soul by His gracious presence....
>
> We should have a deep desire for this experience, for every rational soul should desire with all its strength to draw close to God, and to be united to Him by its awareness of His unseen presence,... for it is life and love, strength and light, joy and peace to a chosen soul.
>
> A soul that has once experienced it cannot therefore lose it without pain; it cannot cease to desire it, because it is so good in itself and brings such comfort. And what can bring greater comfort to a soul than to be withdrawn by grace from the clamour of worldly affairs, from the corruption of its own desires, and from unprofitable love of creatures into the peace and joy of spiritual love? Nothing can exceed this joy. Nothing can bring greater joy to one who loves God than His own gracious presence revealed to a pure soul. He is never depressed or sad except when he feels imprisoned by the

> body, and he is never completely glad or happy except when he is utterly unconscious of self, as he is when he contemplates God in the spirit.
>
> *Walter Hilton, Ladder of Perfection 2:41, LPH pp.233–34*

Spiritual comfort, reiterates Thomas à Kempis, is a divine gift that arises as a part of the process of spiritual evolution. It should humble the soul, as well as provide inner strength to deal with temptation:

> When God bestows spiritual comfort, receive it with a grateful heart; but remember that it comes of God's free gift, and not of your own merit. Do not be proud, nor over joyful, nor foolishly presumptuous; rather, be the more humble for this gift, more cautious and more prudent in all your doings, for this hour will pass, and temptation will follow it. When comfort is withdrawn, do not immediately despair, but humbly and patiently await the will of heaven; for God is able to restore to you a consolation even richer than before. This is nothing new or strange to those who know the ways of God. . . .
>
> I have never found anyone, however religious and devout, who did not sometimes experience withdrawal of grace, or feel a lessening of devotion. And no saint has ever lived, however highly rapt and enlightened, who did not suffer temptation sooner or later. For he is not worthy of high contemplation who has not suffered some trials for God's sake. Indeed, the temptation that precedes is often a sign of comfort to follow. For heavenly comfort is promised to those who have been tried and tempted. . . .
>
> Divine comfort is granted that a man may be the stronger to endure adversity; and temptation follows, lest he become proud of his virtue. The devil never sleeps, nor is the flesh yet dead; never cease, therefore, to prepare yourself for battle against the unresting enemies who lie in wait for you on all sides.
>
> *Thomas à Kempis, Imitation of Christ 2:9, ICTK pp.79–80*

To find this spiritual comfort, writes Meister Eckhart, it is necessary to turn away from all worldly comforts:

> If you would seek and find perfect joy and comfort in God, see to it that you are free of all creatures and of all comfort from creatures; for assuredly, as long as you are or can be comforted by creatures, you will never find true comfort. But when nothing can comfort you but God, then God will comfort you, and with Him and in Him all that is bliss. While what is not God comforts you, you will have no

> comfort here or hereafter; but when creatures give you no comfort and you have no taste for them, then you will find comfort both here and hereafter.
>
> *Meister Eckhart, Book of Divine Comfort, STE3 p.76*

Then the soul will enjoy – beyond all other joys – the depths of spiritual meditation, safe in the blissful darkness of its own inner being, which sooner or later is realized to be light:

> Oh, I would like to stay forever in the deep, dark comfort of God!
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM p.112*

See also: **consolation**, **solace (spiritual)**.

communion The sharing and exchanging of thoughts, emotions and feelings, in mutual harmony, especially mentally or spiritually; mystically, the soul's experience of sharing in the Divine, a co-mingling of the individual being with that of the Supreme; hence, meditation, contemplation, interior prayer, leading to union with God.

Such communion is of spirit with spirit, far beyond all normal human understanding:

> I want to help you tie the spiritual knot of burning love between you and your God, in spiritual oneness and harmony of will. For you know well that God is a spirit,[1] and whoever desires to be united to Him must enter into the truth and depth of the spirit, far transcending any bodily thing.
>
> *Cloud of Unknowing 47; cf. CU pp.96–97, CUCW p.116, CUEU pp.189–90*

Since spirit is the essential reality of both the soul and God, communion is a matter of awareness of the divine presence. It unlocks the secrets of many mysteries:

> O Lord, heavenly Father, between You and me there is ever an inexpressible communion in which I see and recognize many unspeakable things.
>
> *Mechthild of Magdeburg, Flowing Light 1:24; cf. RMM pp.53–54*

It is also a joyful and blissful experience for the heart that reaches up to God. Henry Suso – writing of himself in the third person – describes how he found himself in

> joyful communion with the blissful presence of eternal wisdom and he was transfused with bliss.... As a result of this contemplation his face became so happy, his eyes so kind, his heart so jubilant, and all his inner senses sang.
>
> *Henry Suso, Life of the Servant 1:3, LSS p.24*

Communion is a return to the divine Essence. Hence, an unknown medieval author speaks of "a true, pure, immediate and continuous communion with his Source and Beginning".[2] This communion takes place, he says, when

> the soul is one and simple, when it is placed in utter silence. Through simplicity, it has communion with all things, since what is most simple is also most universal; it imparts itself to all things while remaining undivided and unmoved in itself.
>
> *Book of the Poor in Spirit 2:3.1, BPSG p.146*

The Christian fathers, whose works are collected together in the *Philokalia* of the Orthodox Church, have much to say on the subject. The path to communion, says one of them, is a spiritual path. Part of this is interior prayer:

> It is in prayer that the saints experience communion in the hidden energy of God's holiness and inner union with it, and their soul *(nous)* itself is brought through unutterable love into the presence of the Lord.
>
> *Simeon Metaphrastis, Prayer 18, Philokalia; cf. PCT3 p.292*

It even unites the soul with the divine Word:

> Nothing so puts you in communion with God and unites you with the divine *Logos* as pure noetic prayer – when you pray undistractedly in the Spirit, your soul is cleansed by tears, mellowed by compunction and illumined by the light of the Spirit.
>
> *Nikētas Stēthatos, Inner Nature of Things 69, Philokalia, PCT4 p.127*

This kind of prayer, which leads to communion with the Divine, is accompanied by and generates love for God and all creatures. As Origen (*c.*185–254) writes: "Communion with God must be attained by the paths of charity and love."[3]

To maintain a state of ceaseless inner communion, it is also necessary that the soul should seek virtue and perfection, for

> when the soul *(nous)* associates with evil and sordid thoughts *(logismos),* it loses its intimate communion with God.
>
> *Maximos the Confessor, On Love 1:50, Philokalia; cf. PCT2 p.58*

"Useless thoughts spoil all," was the experience of Brother Lawrence, "the mischief begins there." Consequently, he counsels, "we ought to reject them, as soon as we perceive their impertinence,... and return to our communion with God."[4] It follows, therefore, that:

> Truly blessed is the man who seeks virtue, and pursues it, and enquires diligently into its nature, since it is through virtue that he approaches God and enters into spiritual communion with Him.
>
> *John of Damaskos, On the Virtues and Vices, Philokalia, PCT2 p.341*

By avoiding all negativity, the soul is drawn towards the eternal Light and Beauty:

> The man who avoids all bitterness and all the odours of the flesh, will raise himself ... above all the lowly strivings of the world and, indeed, above the entire universe. He will discover that which alone is worthy of our desire; he will become beautiful because he has drawn near to Beauty; and there he will become as luminous as light because he is in communion with the true Light.... The human mind, in leaving this world of dirt and filth by the force of the Spirit, becomes pure and luminous in communion with that true and exalted purity. Man's soul, then, will shine within that purity, filled with rays of light, and will itself become light.
>
> *Gregory of Nyssa, On Virginity, PG44 cols.364a ff., GGG pp.109–10*

Then it enjoys the "ineffable communion" of spirit with Spirit:

> When the soul attains spiritual perfection, totally purged of all the passions and wholly united and commingled with the Holy Spirit, the Intercessor, in ineffable communion, then, through this commingling with the Spirit, the soul is itself enabled to become spirit: it becomes all light, all spirit, all joy, repose, exultation, all love, all tenderness, all goodness and kindness. It is as though it had been swallowed up in the virtues belonging to the power of the Holy Spirit as a stone in the depths of the sea is surrounded by water. Totally united in this way to the Holy Spirit, such people are assimilated to Christ Himself, maintaining the virtues of the Spirit immutable in themselves and revealing their fruits to all.
>
> *Simeon Metaphrastis, Love 90, Philokalia, PCT3 p.325*

By this means:

> Every moment of our lives can be a kind of communion with His love.
>
> *J.-P. de Caussade, Abandonment to Divine Providence 2:7, ADP p.48*

See also: **Eucharist** (8.4), **union with God**.

1. *John* 4:24.
2. Johann Tauler, *Sermons, Feast of All Saints* 1, in *BPSG* p.45.
3. Origen, *On the Song of Songs* 1:3, *OSS* p.41.
4. Brother Lawrence, *Practice of the Presence of God, Conversations 2; cf. PPGL* p.13.

conscious dreaming See **lucid dreaming**.

consolation (L. *consolamentum*) Generally, a source of comfort or solace in a time of suffering, grief, or disappointment, *etc.;* spiritually, a period of grace, short or long, experienced especially during times of otherwise spiritual aridity; an experience of bliss, ecstasy, love, devotion, or other inner experience that refreshes and even ravishes the soul; spiritual comfort, solace or refreshment received as encouragement to persevere on the spiritual path; described by some as times of inner sweetness, tenderness and feelings of devotion, sometimes accompanied by tears and deep sighs, felt in the body as well as in the soul.

Isaac of Nineveh speaks of consolations in which the body moves involuntarily, and the devotee experiences "weeping mingled with joy, which excels the sweetness of honey".[1] Christian writers generally regard consolations as encouragement to the beginner:

> I think the truth is that any consolation and fervour that a soul may experience in the beginning and early days of the spiritual life is, as it were, food sent from heaven to strengthen it in its struggle.
>
> *Walter Hilton, Ladder of Perfection 2:29, LPH p.185*

Consolations are also comfort and refreshment to those going through periods of spiritual aridity, but they are not in themselves the mark of spiritual progress. As St Teresa writes, "Perfection consists not in consolations, but in the increase of love."[2] In fact, it is commonly said that God withdraws consolations in order to develop the devotee's fortitude, perseverance, and maturity. Such fortitude, says John of the Cross, is itself a sign of progress:

> If a soul becomes more patient in suffering and readier to endure lack of consolations, this is a sign that it is making greater progress in virtue.
>
> *John of the Cross, Maxims, Points of Love 41, CWJC3 p.230*

Henry Suso writes that even were the soul to experience "spiritual sweetness and divine consolation and heavenly delight" causing it "at all times, to overflow with the divine dew", this would not be so beneficial for the soul as "affectionate suffering" or "patience in adversity" undergone for the sake of God.[3] Likewise, the Abbé de Tourville:

> We are never so near God as when we have to get on as well as we can without the consolation of feeling His presence. It is not when the child is with his mother that she is most anxious for his welfare. It is when the child thinks he is alone that his mother is most compassionate and thinks of him most tenderly. It is the same with God and ourselves....
>
> Do not be distressed by lack of fervour and consolations. These will come in their own time and in their own way. Our Lord wants you to become mature, and maturity needs these periods of obscurity, of disillusionment and boredom. Maturity comes when we have at last realized that we must love our Lord simply and freely in spite of our own horrible unworthiness and of the unworthiness of nearly everything around us.
>
> *Abbé de Tourville, Letters of Direction 17, LDT pp.89, 93–94*

And François de Sales:

> We come to prayer, purely and simply to pay our respects to God and prove our loyalty. If it pleases Him to speak to us by granting us His inspirations and interior consolations, that would be a great honour and delight. But if He does not show us such favour and leaves us there unnoticed without so much as speaking to us, we must not leave on that account, but on the contrary remain quietly and devoutly in His presence. There can be no doubt that our patience will please Him; He will notice our diligence and perseverance, and favour us another time with His consolations and let us realize the sweetness of prayer. But even if this should be denied us, let us be satisfied ... that it is honour enough for us just to be near Him and in His presence.
>
> *François de Sales, Devout Life 2:9, IDL p.62*

Brother Lawrence counsels living in the divine presence whether or not one is rewarded by consolations:

> Make immediately a holy and firm resolution never more wilfully to forget Him, and to spend the rest of your days in His sacred presence, deprived for the love of Him, if He thinks fit, of all consolations.
>
> *Brother Lawrence, Practice of the Presence of God, Letters 5, PPGL p.40*

There can be good reasons, too, why consolations are withdrawn, often boiling down to the chastening of spiritual pride and the need to develop humility and love:

> A mother refuses sugar to a child subject to worms; so God withdraws His consolations when He sees that we take pleasure in them and are subject to worms of vanity.
>
> *François de Sales, Devout Life 4:14, IDL pp.229–30*

It is all a part of the ebb and flow of spiritual life. As Thomas à Kempis puts it, writing in the name of the Divine:

> I visit my servants in two kinds of ways: with temptation and with consolation. And two lessons I daily teach them: one whereby I rebuke them for their vices, the other whereby I stir them up to increase in virtue.
>
> *Thomas à Kempis, Imitation of Christ 3:3; cf. IC pp.106–7*

Human beings are subject to material temptations, which stand between the soul and its experience of the Divine:

> All worldly pleasures are either vain or unseemly; spiritual joys alone are pleasant and honourable, for they spring from virtue and are infused by God into the pure of heart. But no man may enjoy these heavenly consolations at will, for temptations are seldom absent for long.
>
> False liberty of mind and overweening self-confidence are a great hindrance to heavenly visitations. God is generous in granting us the grace of comfort; but man does ill in not returning all to God with gratitude. This is why His gifts of grace cannot flow freely in us, because we are ungrateful to the Giver, and do not return them to their Fount and Source. God will always give grace to those who are grateful, but what He grants to the humble is withheld from the proud.
>
> *Thomas à Kempis, Imitation of Christ 2:10, ICTK p.81*

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that inner consolations bring far greater joy than any worldly pleasure:

> If you would taste true pleasure and receive the fullness of My consolation, know this: that in the despising of worldly things and in the shunning of base delights shall be your blessing, and you shall win abundant consolation. The more you withdraw yourself from the

> comfort of creatures, the sweeter and more potent will be the consolations that you will find in Me. But you will not find these at once, or without sorrow, toil, and effort. Old habits will stand in your way, but by better (habits) they will be overcome. The body will complain, but by fervour of the spirit it can be disciplined.
>
> *Thomas à Kempis, Imitation of Christ 3:12, ICTK p.109*

And:

> The least spiritual consolation is worth far more than the greatest worldly pleasure; … once tasted, all other consolations are but gall. Those who taste liquorice find it so refreshing that they feel neither hunger nor thirst; so those who have tasted the heavenly manna of spiritual consolation neither hunger nor thirst after earthly consolations, at least not to the extent of setting their heart on them. They are but foretastes of eternal happiness which God gives to those who seek Him; the sugar plums by which He attracts His little ones; the health-giving waters by which He strengthens them; the pledges of their immortality.
>
> *François de Sales, Devout Life 4:13, IDL p.226*

Mechthild of Magdeburg writes that nothing can hurt a soul that is filled with the consolation of divine love:

> When the blessed hour has passed in which
> God has granted the loving soul His sublime consolation –
> Then is the soul so full of delight
> that everything seems to it good,
> which might hurt a loveless soul.
>
> *Mechthild of Magdeburg, Flowing Light 4:15, RMM p.110*

See also: **comfort (spiritual)**, **solace (spiritual)**, **sweetness**.

1. Isaac of Nineveh, *Treatises* 14, *On Solitude, MTIN* p.85.
2. Teresa of Ávila, *Interior Castle* 3:2, *CWTA2* p.227.
3. Henry Suso, *Little Book of Eternal Wisdom* 1:13, *BEW* p.79.

daēna (Av/Pv) *Lit.* vision, sight, insight; mystically, divine revelation, enlightenment, inner vision, vision of God; also, religion, a vision of the truth and the teaching that leads to the mystical vision of God; a spiritual path, a faith; also, as an aspect of human consciousness, conscience, introspective awareness or vision of one's self; possibly from the verbal root *dāy* (to see, to perceive, to

understand); cognate with the Sanskrit *dhyāna* (contemplation, meditation), becoming *dīn* (religion) in later Persian.

In later Zoroastrianism, *Daēna* is personified as a heavenly being or angel who, together with other angels, is associated with various days of the month in the Zoroastrian calendar. A soul is also said to have its own *daēna* – of divine beauty or fiendish ugliness, according to the way an individual has lived his life – who meets the soul after death, prior to its crossing the Bridge of Judgment *(Chinvatō Peretu).* This *daēna* symbolizes or is a projection of the soul's conscience and the way it has lived.[1]

The term appears, probably in its original sense, in the *Gāthās* of Zarathushtra. Speaking as a seeker and devotee, Zarathushtra asks for both inner vision and insight into the true nature of the spiritual path or religion:

> This do I ask, *Ahura,* tell me true:
> grant me revelation *(daēna)* of Yourself –
> For this is the highest aspiration of any living being. . . .
>
> This do I ask, *Ahura,* tell me true:
> how is it that those to whom
> revelation *(daēna)* of Yourself has been granted,
> have come to be absorbed in Your devotion *(ārmaiti)?*
> *Zarathushtra, Yasna 44:10–11; cf. DSZ*

In later Avestan texts, the religion of Zarathushtra came to be known as the *vohu daēna* (good religion, primal religion). Zarathushtra himself speaks of his teachings as this "good religion *(vohu daēna)*" and the religion of the divine First Mind *(Vohu Manah),* the divine creative power. It is the spiritual path to God followed by his devotees, among whom were royalty and his probable successor, Frashoshtra:

> The highest aspiration of Zarathushtra Spitama has been fulfilled,
> for to him, *Ahura Mazdā,* through His Truth,
> has granted the blessing of a holy life through all eternity.
> And even those who opposed him have learnt the teachings
> and practice of this good religion *(vohu daēna).*
>
> So let all seek to please *Mazdā,*
> striving in thought and word and deed,
> choosing the right way of worship *(Yasna).*
> Royal Vishtaspa, devotee of Zarathushtra Spitama,
> and Frashoshtra, too, meditate on this path of Truth –
> the religion *(daēna)* revealed to our saviour *(saoshyant)* by *Ahura.* . . .

> For this path is intended especially for human beings;
> In the Father's and the master's name,
> both for the shepherd *(vāstrya)* and for his disciples,
> it guides them in what must be done.
> This is the holy path of the followers of Truth *(ashavan),*
> the radiant heritage of the First Mind *(Vohu Manah).*
> May *Ahura Mazdā* grant the gift of this good religion *(vohu daēna),*
> throughout all ages.
>
> *Zarathushtra, Yasna 53:1–2, 4; cf. DSZ*

See also: **dīn** (▸4).

1. *E.g. Dātistān-i Dinīk* 24:5, in *GVM* p.84; *Vendidād, Fargard* 19:30, *SBE4* p.213.

daigedatsu (J) *Lit.* great *(dai)* liberation *(gedatsu);* final or ultimate liberation; freedom from *saṃsāra* (transmigration) and from all personal defects and impurities; *nirvāṇa,* buddhahood. Eihei Dōgen Zenji (1200–1253), founder of the school of *Sōtō Zen,* writes:

> How great *(dai)* is the clothing of liberation *(gedatsu):*
> though without form, it is the robe of real happiness.
> *Eihei Dōgen, Shōbōgenzō, Kesa-kudoku, T82 2582:54a, SDT1 (12) p.187 (n.65)*

See also: **moksha**, **vimoksha**.

daishin (J) *Lit.* great *(dai)* mind *(shin);* vast, magnanimous, or generous mind; the quality of an open mind that sees everything and everyone from a broad and wise perspective, with a neutral, unjudgmental attitude, that sees things for what they are without any personal bias.

Dōgen Zenji (1200–1253), founder of the *Sōtō* school of *Zen* Buddhism writes in his *Eihei shingi* ('Dōgen's Rules of Purity') of three essential mental attitudes: *kishin* (joyful mind), *rōshin* (nurturing mind), and *daishin.* When well-established in *zazen* (sitting meditation), these three mental attitudes allow sentient beings to live and work together harmoniously in lovingkindness, beyond the narrowness of normal human limitations. Of *daishin,* he says:

> Great mind *(daishin)* is, in its spirit, like a great mountain or a great sea: it has no partiality and no factionalism. Lifting an ounce, it does not consider it light; hefting a stone, it does not consider it heavy. Being drawn by the voices of spring, it does not wander into the swamp of

> spring. Although it sees the colours of autumn, it has nothing whatsoever of the spirit of autumn. It contrasts the four seasons against the backdrop of a single vista. It views pennyweights and ounces (of silver) within the context of a single system of measurement. As an emblem of this sameness, we can write the character 'great *(dai)*'. You should know the character 'great *(dai)*'. You should study the character 'great *(dai)*'.
>
> *Eihei Dōgen, Eihei shingi, ESED*

See also: **kishin**, **rōshin**.

dān, **jīndān**, **xiāndān** (C) *Lit.* cinnabar, red *(dān);* elixir, alchemy *(dān);* pellet, pill, powder *(dān);* gold *(jīn)* elixir *(dān);* elixir *(dān)* of immortality *(xiān);* in Daoism, one's innate original nature *(yuánxìng, běnxìng)* or true nature *(zhēnxìng),* which is one with the *Dào* and is attained by spiritual practice; awareness of or state of original spiritual purity. The growth of this spiritual awareness is known as, among other metaphors, nurturing or generating the spiritual embryo *(shèngtāi)* or the immortal embryo *(xiāntāi).*

Jīndān refers to the two naturally occurring physical ingredients – gold and cinnabar (mercuric sulphide) – that were the substances most commonly used by alchemists in their endeavours to concoct an 'elixir' that would deliver physical immortality itself or at least prolong life. Since *dān* also means 'pill', *jīndān* is also translated as 'gold pill' or 'golden pill'.

Jīndān, dān, jīndān dào (way of the gold elixir) and *dāndào* (way of the elixir) are all used as names for the path of inner alchemy *(nèidān).* In *nèidān* (inner alchemy), *dān* may also symbolize inner spiritual processes. In *wàidān* (outer alchemy), *dān* may also refer to the outer alchemical process itself.

Jīndān was once the more commonly used term for what is now known as the *nèidān* tradition. In present times, the term *nèidān* covers the entire range of spiritual teachings and meditational practices associated with the tradition, but for much of its history *nèidān* has had a more restricted meaning. In this wider context, *jīndān* and *nèidān* both refer to the teachings and associated body of literature, to the spiritual practices relating to these teachings, and to the state of original spiritual awareness reached by means of these practices. Although clearly a part of the Daoist mystical tradition, evolving syncretically from the Chinese, Daoist and Buddhist milieu, with a significant tantric element, the more detailed historical origins of the *jīndān* or *nèidān* tradition are uncertain.

Jīndān is used along with *Dào,* Great Ultimate *(tàijí),* the One *(yī)* and many other names for the primordial, inherent and original Oneness or Awareness that is the essence of Reality, and of which one's original nature is a part. *Jīndān,* however, is also used in a wider variety of contexts and with

a greater spread of implied meaning than those terms that are used almost exclusively for the primordial One.

Jīndān refers to one's real or original spiritual nature or awareness. Thus *jīndān* is also termed the 'inner elixir' – 'inner', because it is to be found within every human being; 'elixir', because it is the essential immortal element of a human being. This is the 'substance' believed to cure all ills. Daoists have explained that this true inner elixir is present in every human being, but is realized by only a few. Liú Yīmíng (1734–1821) says:

> This gold elixir *(jīndān)* is inherently bestowed upon human beings by heaven.... Gold elixir *(jīndān)* is another name for the undifferentiated *(hùnchéng)* original nature *(běnxìng).* There is no other gold elixir *(jīndān)* outside of one's original nature *(běnxìng).* This elixir *(dān)* is inherently complete within everyone. It is neither more in a sage, nor less in an ordinary person. It is the seed within immortals *(xiān)* and *buddhas (fó),* the origin and root of wise and holy men *(shèngxián).*... But when it acquires the human form and the intellect *(zhīshí)* develops, then egoistic desires come into play; and when personality arises, what is virtuous and heavenly is obscured; innate moral conscience *(liángzhī liángnéng)* is corrupted *(bùliáng),* and the essence of utter purity is lost.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17*

Words often change their meaning over time or accrue secondary meanings that are generally impossible to convey in translation. In the case of *jīndān, jīn* (gold) represents the immutability and incorruptibility that lies beyond the transient material world. Its yellow colour is associated with *yīn* (or female) energies. Gold is universally valued, and since the metal was rarely found in ancient China and was generally imported from surrounding countries, *jīn* implies something especially precious.

In its wider meaning, *dān* connotes the essential nature of something, and by extension includes a sense of oneness, authenticity, sincerity, simplicity, and concentration.[1] *Dān* also means a 'pill'. In Traditional Chinese Medicine, pills are formed as small spheres. Being spherical, the pill is understood to symbolize the essential wholeness and completeness of one's original nature. Cinnabar being reddish in colour, *dān* also means red. In Chinese culture, red is associated with *yáng* (or male) energies, and hence carries the significant symbolic representations of the sun, fire, and also royalty.

Liú Yīmíng explains the metaphorical significance of the term:

> Gold *(jīn)* is something strong, eternal, and indestructible. The elixir pill *(dān)* is something round, complete, luminous and pure,

with no deficiency or imperfection. The immortals *(xiān)* of ancient times used the term gold elixir *(jīndān)* as a metaphor for the nature *(xìng)* of the true spirit *(zhēnlíng),* which is originally complete and radiant *(yuánmíng).*

Confucians call this (original) nature *(xìng)* the 'Great Ultimate *(tàijí)*'; Buddhists call it 'complete awareness *(yuánjué)*'; and Daoists call it the 'gold elixir *(jīndān)*'. Although these are three different names, they are in essence the same one thing. Confucians cultivate it to become sages *(shèng);* Buddhists cultivate it to become *buddhas (fó);* Daoists cultivate it to become immortals *(xiān).* All the saints *(shèngrén)* of the three teachings consider the original true nature *(běnlái zhēnxìng)* to be the basis of attaining the *Dào.*

People ignorant of this produce gold pills *(jīndān)* by smelting five metals and eight minerals. This is a mistake. One's true nature *(zhēnxìng)* is refined by fire to develop and mature in the great furnace of creation. It is as eternal as heaven and earth, as luminous as the sun and moon. How can it be produced from anything of this material world? …

When the alchemical *(dān)* scriptures and books of the masters speak of gathering medicines and refining the gold elixir *(jīndān),* they are referring to the inherent, formless and non-physical Truth, not the physical medicines of this world, nor to anything physical in the human body.

Liú Yīmíng, Xiàngyán pòyí, ZW247, DS14

This gold elixir, he repeats, is present within everyone. The "mysterious pass *(xuánguān)*" of which he speaks, and which is known by many names, is the transition between the material and the spiritual, the 'place' where the spirit can focus during meditation and enter the spiritual dimension. Liú Yīmíng differentiates between *zhēnzhī* (true knowledge), which refers to the highest spiritual or mystical knowledge that arises from oneness with the *Dào,* and *língzhī* (reflected knowledge), which is the diffused reflection of *zhēnzhī* at all levels other than that of the *Dào* itself:

The great medicine *(dàyào)* of the gold elixir *(jīndān)* is inherent in everyone; it already exists in every house (*i.e.* body). If you meticulously study the true teaching, seek an enlightened teacher *(míngshī),* know the two medicines of true knowledge *(zhēnzhī)* and reflected knowledge *(língzhī),* and find the one opening *(qiào)* of the mysterious pass *(xuánguān)* – then, without let or hindrance, you will go straight to the other shore. In one day's work, you will attain the illuminating elixir *(dān)* of pure *yáng.* Why wait three years or nine years?

Liú Yīmíng, Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17

According to the teachings of inner alchemy, the gold elixir is produced by refining and merging the "three treasures of vital essence *(jīng),* life energy *(qì),* and spirit *(shén)*". These three fundamental body energies are to be transmuted, the lower into the higher. In this context, the "central palace *(zhōnggōng)*" is effectively another term for the mysterious pass that lies in the head:

> To learn the way of spiritual immortals *(shénxiān)* does not require much doing; to find the elixir *(dān)* is simply a matter of refining the three treasures *(sānbǎo)* of vital essence *(jīng),* life energy *(qì),* and spirit *(shén).* When the three treasures *(sānbǎo)* are merged in the central palace *(zhōnggōng),* the gold elixir *(jīndān)* is attained. Is it not easy to understand? How can it be hard to practise? If you find something hard to understand or difficult to practise, it is because it is a fallacious deception, and thus confusing to you.
>
> *Lǐ Dàochún, Zhōnghé jí, DZ249, JY226*

Many alchemical texts explain that the elixir is produced from the union of the energies of heaven (*yáng*/sun/dragon) and earth (*yīn*/moon/tiger) before the "primordial opening *(zǔqiào)*" – also known as the 'mysterious opening *(xuánqiào)*', another term for the mysterious pass. It is the point of transition between "heaven and earth", the source from which the material creation comes into being. The "true Energy *(zhēnqì)*", also called *dàoqì* (Energy of the *Dào*), *yīqì* (one Energy) and by various other names, is the primordial *qì* from which the entire creation is manifest. Master Zhào Bìchén (1860–1942) writes:

> When the union of heaven and earth is attained, and the light of the sun and moon merge before the primordial opening *(zǔqiào);* this is the essence of the one original Reality *(húnyuán zhēnyī).* This is the place where vital essence *(jīng),* life energy *(qì)* and spirit *(shén)* unite, where mind *(xīn)* and intellect *(yì)* are empty, and where there is neither self nor non-self.
>
> Before the primordial opening *(zǔqiào),* the true Energy *(zhēnqì)* appears to be infinite. This is called the Great Ultimate *(tàijí),* the gold elixir *(jīndān),* or complete awareness *(yuánjué).*
>
> *Zhào Bìchén, Xìngmìng fǎjué míngzhǐ 7; cf. TYAI pp.67–68*

In his poem "Song of the Gold Elixir," Hóng Jiàosuì of the *Lóngmén* ('Dragon Gate') school describes something of what is experienced during the progressive realization of this elixir. There is, he says, a rushing sound, together with flashes of inner light in the forehead; but he counsels practitioners to hold the mind still without fear:

> There is (the sound of) ten thousand galloping horses in the ears. Shooting stars and flashes of lightning scorch the eyebrows. If you reach this point, do not be alarmed or frightened. Hold the mind-spirit *(xīnshén)* steady, and do not let it move.
>
> *Hóng Jiàosuì, Jīndān gē, in Sūn Bù'èr nǚgōng nèidān cìdìshī zhù, SBNN*

In another passage, master Liú Yīmíng describes the transcendent subtlety of the gold elixir calling it the "true seed of your (original) nature and (true spiritual) life":

> You must understand that the true seed *(zhēnzhǒng)* of your (original) nature *(xìng)* and (true spiritual) life *(mìng)* is nothing other than the inherent *(xiāntiān)* one true Energy *(zhēnyī zhī qì)* that arises from the Origin *(běnlái).* You are looking at it, but you do not see it. You are listening to it, but you do not hear it. You are trying to grasp it in your hands, but you do not hold it. It is to be found nowhere but within this very body *(yīshēn).* It is to be sought nowhere outside the body. It is neither apart from the body, nor attached to the body. It is within the undifferentiated abstruseness *(huǎnghū)* and indiscernible profundity *(yǎomíng),* hidden in the realm of silent Emptiness *(xūwú).* Internally, it is true emptiness *(zhēnkōng).* Externally, it is this amazing existence *(miàoyǒu).* It cannot be taught in words; it cannot be depicted by drawing nor written with a pen. If we must draw an image, it would be a simple circle. If we must give it a name, then the Confucians call it the 'Great Ultimate *(tàijí)*'; Buddhists call it 'complete awareness *(yuánjué)*'; Daoists call it the 'gold elixir *(jīndān)*'.
>
> The Great Ultimate *(tàijí),* complete awareness *(yuánjué),* and the gold elixir *(jīndān)* – although these are three different names, in essence they are the same one thing. This one thing is the true seed *(zhēnzhǒng)* of your (original) nature *(xìng)* and (true spiritual) life *(mìng).* To thoroughly investigate the principle is to thoroughly seek this true seed *(zhēnzhǒng).* The meaning of fully developing your (original) nature *(xìng)* is to realize fully this true seed *(zhēnzhǒng).* The meaning of attaining (true spiritual) life *(mìng)* is to attain this true seed *(zhēnzhǒng).*
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùdào lù, ZW268, DS18*

In his *Bàopǔzǐ nèipiān* ('Book of the Master who Embraces Simplicity'), Gě Hóng (283–343) points to the limitations of external alchemical practices:

> Those who do not obtain the gold elixir *(jīndān)* and only take plant and herbal medicines and practise lesser arts can extend the number of

> their years and defer the time of death, but cannot attain immortality *(xiān).* Some only know how to take herbal medicines, but ignore the essential arts for reversing the course of aging: they entirely lack the principle of long life.
>
> *Gě Hóng, Bàopǔzǐ nèipiān 13, BNJM p.243, DZ1185, JY144; cf. in GCDP p.130*

He goes on to say that the gold elixir protects the practitioner from all kinds of dangers and evils:

> If one takes the great medicine of the gold elixir *(jīndān),* the hundred evils do not come near, even if one continues to live in the world. If one takes only herbs and plants and small pills of the eight minerals, one can only be cured of illness and lengthen one's lifespan. This is because such preparations are insufficient to avert the calamities that come from without.
>
> *Gě Hóng, Bàopǔzǐ nèipiān 18, BNJM p.327, DZ1185, JY144; cf. in GCDP p.131*

An early fifth-century (CE) text of the *Língbǎo* ('Sacred Jewel') school also says that "the gold elixir *(jīndān)* is within your body *(xíng).*"[2]

Thomas Cleary, a translator of many of Liú Yīmíng's writings, summarizes some of the mistaken notions regarding the gold elixir that are mentioned by Liú Yīmíng:

> People of the world do not know what the gold pill is – they imagine it in defined locations in the body, or they think it is made from minerals, or they think it is crystallized from the energy and blood of male and female, or they think it is solidified by interaction of the energies of the heart and genitals, or they think it exists through a clustering of vitality and spirit, or they think it is in the elixir field or ocean of energy in the lower abdomen, or they think it is in the centre of the torso or the top of the head, or they think it is in the centre of the forehead or the back of the brain, or they think it is between the kidneys and genitals. It is impossible to mention all comparable varieties of notions about the gold pill, so many are they. All of them take what is artificial to be real. That is why those who study the *Dào* are as numerous as ox hairs, while those who accomplish the *Dào* are as rare as unicorn horns.
>
> *Thomas Cleary, Summarizing Liú Yīmíng, TCC4 pp.447–48*

Following the path of *jīndān* or *dān* bestows equanimity and tranquillity. Master Zhāng Bóduān (C11th) hence observes that "practitioners of *dān*" deal with the constant movement of the outer world from a 'place' of inner stillness:

> As something silent *(jìrán)* and still *(bùdòng),* yet which functions when prompted, is how I use my mind. As something racing wildly and endlessly is how you use your mind.
>
> The North Star does not move. It is the surrounding stars that move relative to it. The surrounding stars cannot help but move. Their movement *(dòng)* is relative to the North Star, which is the axis of their movement *(dòng).*
>
> Movement *(dòng)* in the midst of stillness *(bùdòng)* is how practitioners of *dān* use their mind. Stillness *(bùdòng)* in the midst of movement *(dòng)* is how virtuous men *(rénzhě)* use their mind. To remain aware of stillness *(bùdòng)* in the midst of movement *(dòng)* is the best use of the mind.
>
> *Zhāng Bóduān, Qīnghuá mìwén 1, DZ240*

Master Liú Yīmíng explains that the gold elixir is not something external. It is a formless inner power that arises within the mind:

> The gold elixir *(jīndān)* is just a descriptive name. How can it have form? I say it can be seen, but not with the physical eyes. Buddhists say, "Without looking outside, you can see things within; what you see within you cannot see outside." A Daoist scripture says, "You are looking at it, but you do not see it. You are listening to it, but you do not hear it." This is what the *Dào* is.
>
> Looking but not seeing does not mean it cannot be envisioned. Listening but not hearing does not mean it cannot be heard. This kind of 'looking' and 'listening' means that it cannot be discerned by physical ears or eyes. It is seen and heard by the attention *(yì)* of the mind *(xīn).*
>
> Take the example of a strong wind. When it blows in the mountains, the trees sway; when it blows over water, the waves surge. How can we say that it is not there? Yet when you look, you cannot see it; when you try to catch it, you cannot grasp it in your hands. How then can we say that it is there?
>
> It is the same with the nature of the gold elixir *(jīndān).* When you begin to refine the elixir *(dān),* you find that existence and nonexistence *(yǒuwú),* movement and stillness *(dòngjìng),* alternate with each other. When it is attained, all *karmas* (*zhūyuán,* all causes) instantly disappear, all things become empty, movement and stillness are both forgotten, existence and nonexistence are both dissolved.
>
> *Lǐ Dàochún, Zhōnghé jí, DZ249, JY226*

See also: **huándān**, **nèidān** (8.5), **xuánzhū**.

1. See Fabrizio Pregardio, *Great Clarity, GCDP* pp.48–51.
2. *Bāwēi zhàolóng miàojīng, DZ361; cf.* in *DHK* p.465.

dàoxīn, **zhēnxīn** (C) *Lit.* mind *(xīn)* of *Dào;* true or real *(zhēn)* mind *(xīn);* in the *nèidān* (inner alchemy) tradition, the mind that is in tune with the *Dào;* a mind that is focused on the *Dào,* always aware of the all-pervading presence of the *Dào;* the spiritual pole of the mind; the original, innate mind that is understood in Daoist philosophy to be one's original nature. The *dàoxīn* is also called *tiānxīn* (mind of heaven) because of its pure and unsullied nature prior to birth, although some texts credit *tiānxīn* with the higher status of being present before the creative process began. The *dàoxīn* is commonly contrasted with the human mind *(rénxīn),* the worldly mind that is generally occupied with a multitude of concerns regarding bodily and worldly existence. The human mind is a lower expression of the mind of *Dào,* which is regarded as part of the *Dào.*

The term *dàoxīn* is used in several *nèidān* texts, especially *Wùzhēn piān* ('Awakening to Reality') by the eleventh-century master Zhāng Bóduān, and in texts from the *Quánzhēn* ('Wholeness and Truth') school, founded in the twelfth century. It is also commonly found in the writings of the *Qīng* dynasty (1644–1912) adept Liú Yīmíng (1734–1821). There are various opinions concerning the location of the *dàoxīn.* In some *nèidān* texts that are particularly concerned with the body's lower energy centres, also known as 'elixir fields *(dāntián)*', the *dàoxīn* is located below and between the kidneys; others locate it in the heart or between the eyebrows.[1]

Being conscious of the unifying presence of the *Dào,* the mind of *Dào* is universal, operating beyond the sphere of personal intentions and preferences. Unconditioned by culture and personality, it is free of thought and acquired knowledge, conceptual or empirical. The mind of *Dào* knows directly and intuitively through mystical insight or gnosis, possessing real knowledge of the *Dào.* Because the mind of *Dào* transcends individuality and is free of emotion, it responds consciously to events or people. By contrast, the human mind reacts out of emotion and conditioning. Unlike the human mind, the mind of *Dào* leads to action that does not arise from personal motivation; it functions through the principle of *wúwéi* (non-action), which is unforced, uncontrived, selfless action.

Master Lǐ Dàochún (C13th) says that the primary difference between the human mind and the mind of *Dào* lies in the stillness and "unmoving" nature of the "mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)*". He also equates the mind of *Dào* with an "illumined mind *(zhàoxīn)*":

> The ancients say, "Always extinguish a moving mind *(dòngxīn);* never extinguish an illumined mind *(zhàoxīn).*" An unmoving mind

> *(bùdòngxīn)* is an illumined mind; a mind that never stops is a deluded mind *(wàngxīn).* The illumined mind is the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn),* the deluded mind is the human mind *(rénxīn).*
>
> The saying, "The mind of Dào *(dàoxīn)* is exceedingly elusive" means that it is fine and subtle, difficult to experience. The saying, "The human mind is a great danger" means that it is treacherous and restless.
>
> The mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* is within the human mind and the human mind is within the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn).* Which predominates depends simply on whether the mind is moving *(dòng)* or still *(jìng).* Only in those who "adhere persistently to the centre" is the illumined mind constantly present and the deluded mind unmoving. Then what was treacherous becomes calm and peaceful, and what was elusive becomes clear and manifest.
>
> At this point, the mind free from delusion is recovered, and the *Dào* free from delusion is attained. As the *Yìjīng* says, this is "returning, so as to reveal the mind of heaven and earth".
>
> *Lǐ Dàochún, Zhōnghé jí, DZ249, JY226*

Following in the *nèidān* tradition, Liú Yīmíng frequently contrasts the mind of *Dào* or true mind *(zhēnxīn)* with the human mind *(rénxīn).* Discovery of the mind of *Dào* requires control of the human mind:

> The exercise of self-refinement *(liànjǐ)* begins with controlling the mind *(xiángxīn).* But to control the mind, it is necessary to know the mind. There is a difference between the human mind *(rénxīn)* and the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn),* a difference between the true mind *(zhēnxīn)* and the false mind *(jiǎxīn).*
>
> The mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* is the original *(běnlái):* it neither recognizes nor discriminates (perceives no duality); it yields to the laws of the Emperor *(dì, i.e.* the *Dào).* The human mind *(rénxīn)* is the false mind: it acquires knowledge, discrimination (between things), the seven passions, and the six desires.
>
> The true mind *(zhēnxīn)* benefits one's (original) nature and (true spiritual) life *(xìngmìng);* the false mind harms one's (original) nature and (true spiritual) life.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Bǎizì bēi zhù, ZW257, DS3*

Everything, he says, arises from the inherent one true Energy. But in order to come into contact with this Energy, a practitioner must first cultivate the mind of *Dào,* because the "inherent Energy *(xiāntiān zhī qì)* is concealed within the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)*":

> The inherent *(xiāntiān)* one true Energy *(zhēnyī zhī qì)* is the primordial Energy *(zǔqì)* that creates heaven, earth, and human beings. It pervades all natural laws and is present at all times. It is what is called the primordial Source (*zōngzǔ,* primordial Ancestor) of (original) nature *(xìng)* and (spiritual) life *(mìng).* Those who are aware of it are saints *(shèng);* those who ignore it are ordinary mortals *(fán).*
>
> In human beings, this Energy *(qì)* is concealed and is not manifest. Even if it suddenly manifests from time to time, people are so entangled in money and status, and so caught up in self-centred desires, that they miss it, even though it is right before their faces. A fleeting glimpse and then it is gone.
>
> To seek this Energy *(qì),* you must first come to know the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn),* because the inherent Energy *(xiāntiān zhī qì)* is concealed within the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn).* The mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* is the effect, the inherent Energy is the cause. They are named differently, but their Source is the same. In cultivation of the *Dào (xiūdào),* the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* is the primordial Source *(zōngzǔ).*
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Bǎizì bēi zhù, ZW257, DS3*

To become aware of this Reality, the mind of *Dào* must realize itself as the master of the human mind; when this happens, the human mind becomes the mind of *Dào:*

> The mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* is the master *(zhǔrén);* the human mind *(rénxīn)* is the servant *(núpú).* Awareness that the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* is the primordial Source *(zōngzǔ)* is like the master giving orders to the servant, and the servant obeying the orders of the master. The human mind *(rénxīn)* is vanquished without the act of conquest. In movement or in stillness, it is the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* that is functioning. The human mind *(rénxīn)* is transformed into the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn).* Inwardly, there are no delusional thoughts. Outwardly, there are no foolish affairs. Inside and outside are peaceful and still. Impressions from without *(kèqì)* cannot enter within. This is the state of no-thing *(wúshì zhī jìng).* In this state of nothingness, being empty and enlightened, there is nothing but the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn).* What else do you seek? …
>
> When responding to things without confusion *(bùmí),* the truth of the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* is always present. When the truth of the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* is always present, then unrighteousness does not arise in the human mind *(rénxīn).* When unrighteousness does not arise in the human mind *(rénxīn),* then the temperamental nature *(qìzhì zhī xìng)* does not develop. When the temperamental nature *(qìzhì zhī xìng)* does not develop, then the inherent nature *(tiānfù zhī xìng)*

> is clear and bright, like a crystal tower, unattached and independent, unmoving and unwavering, spontaneously still.
>
> In short, the effect of dwelling inwardly with your (true) nature *(xìng)* rests entirely in the exercise of responding without confusion *(bùmí).* When confused *(mí),* the human mind *(rénxīn)* is active in dealing with affairs. Then your true nature *(zhēnxìng)* is obscured and your false nature *(jiǎxìng)* grows. When unconfused *(bùmí),* the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* is active in dealing with affairs. Then the false nature *(jiǎxìng)* is transformed, and your true nature *(zhēnxìng)* is revealed.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Bǎizì bēi zhù, ZW257, DS3*

When the mind of *Dào* is present, "then there is not the slightest opportunity for the human mind *(rénxīn)* to grow," and the enlightenment of an "immortal" becomes attainable:

> The human mind *(rénxīn)* is active and excitable. One moment it is here, another moment it is elsewhere, completely lost and far away from its home. When it sees things, it moves, like dust rising when the wind blows. . . .
>
> If you remain constantly present with the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn),* keep watch and ward off the danger (of wandering away), be vigilant every moment, then there is not the slightest opportunity for the human mind *(rénxīn)* to grow. . . .
>
> Moreover, with the persistent practice of increasing the positive *(yáng)* energy of the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn),* and decreasing the negative *(yīn)* energy of the human mind *(rénxīn),* increasing and decreasing until there is nothing more to increase or decrease, then the human mind *(rénxīn)* will die, and the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* will be firmly established.
>
> Then the seed of Truth *(zhēnzhǒng)* will be in your hands, by means of which you can become a saint *(shèng),* an immortal *(xiān),* a complete *buddha (chéngfó).* Then the great foundation of your (original) nature and (true spiritual) life *(xìngmìng)* will be established. From there, devoting yourself to the goal of upward ascent, and applying yourself to more advanced forms of cultivation, there is no reason why you should not attain self-realization *(zìdé).*
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùdào lù, ZW268, DS18*

Similarly, Liú Yīmíng says that to give life to the mind of *Dào,* the human mind must "die first":

> People cannot attain immortality because they are unable to die first. To die means to let the human mind *(rénxīn)* die.

> The physical heart-mind *(xīn)* is the cause of the seven passions and the six desires, the five thieves, and the eight cognitions. It is drawn towards all evil and devious things. It is associated with gangs of scoundrels that are harmful to the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn).* When the human mind *(rénxīn)* lives, the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* dies. When the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* dies, the positive Energy *(zhèngqì)* is consumed and your (original) nature and (true spiritual) life *(xìngmìng)* are confused and shaken. . . .
>
> For the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* to live, the human mind *(rénxīn)* must first die. When the human mind *(rénxīn)* dies, then all the gangs of thieves will be automatically destroyed like a snake without a head. When they are completely destroyed, the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* automatically comes to life and the positive Energy *(zhèngqì)* is recovered.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùdào lù, ZW268, DS18*

Liú Yīmíng explains that according to Daoist philosophy, on first taking birth a human being is pure. There is only the "one original nature *(běnxìng)* of true consciousness and potential *(liángzhī liángnéng),* with no trace of impurity". It is "bright and radiant, clean and uncovered, naked and unrestrained".[2] However, as the child grows, the original nature mixes with human desire, the balance of *yīn* (materiality) and *yáng* (spirituality) is disturbed, the spiritual no longer dominates the material, and the "inherent Truth *(tiānzhēn)* is veiled". So, in the majority of cases, by the time a human being has reached adulthood, the material has eclipsed the spiritual. As a result:

> When inherent Truth *(tiānzhēn)* is veiled, the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* is concealed and barely discernible. When the intellect *(zhīshí)* develops, the human mind *(rénxīn)* grows and becomes a danger. Then the barely discernible appears to be virtually nonexistent, because the spiritual *(yáng)* no longer dominates the material *(yīn).* And because the material dominates the spiritual, the dangerous (mind) generates passions in response to whatever it encounters.
>
> But although the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* is barely discernible and the human mind *(rénxīn)* a danger, the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* is not yet entirely extinguished, and the human mind *(rénxīn)* not yet entirely dominant. The mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* is not entirely extinguished in that light occasionally appears in the darkness. This is called true (spiritual) knowledge *(zhēnzhī).* But it appears quickly and as quickly disappears. The human mind *(rénxīn)* is not entirely dominant in that it can adapt to situations. This is called reflected knowledge *(língzhī).* But it is nothing more than illusions created by consciousness *(líng).*
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17*

Liú Yīmíng is differentiating between *zhēnzhī* (true knowledge), which refers to the highest spiritual or mystical knowledge arising from oneness with the *Dào,* and *língzhī* (reflected knowledge), which is the diffused reflection of *zhēnzhī* at all levels other than that of the *Dào* itself. He then explains the purpose of spiritual alchemy, and the central role of the mind of *Dào* in leading, informing and transforming the human mind, so that it becomes imbued with 'true knowledge' of *Dào:*

> The method of cultivating the elixir *(xiūdān)* is to return to the spiritual *(yáng)* from the midst of the material *(yīn),* to bring out the true knowledge *(zhēnzhī)* of the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn),* to transform the reflected knowledge *(língzhī)* of the human mind *(rénxīn),* so that this reflected knowledge returns to Truth, and true knowledge is regained by consciousness. The mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* is firm and strong; the human mind *(rénxīn)* is soft and yielding. *Yīn* and *yáng* intermingle, firm and soft adapt to each other, strong and yielding are balanced, and Truth and consciousness do not separate, but return to true consciousness and potential, which was the original state in the very beginning.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17*

In time, the two minds harmonize with each other, ultimately merging to restore the unified innate awareness that existed before birth. Master Zhāng Bóduān (C11th) uses similar imagery:

> When restoration of the elixir *(huándān)* is attained, the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* becomes firm and strong, and the human mind *(rénxīn)* becomes soft and yielding. Then true knowledge *(zhēnzhī)* and reflected knowledge *(língzhī)* merge into undifferentiated oneness, full and complete, bright and radiant, back to the original state of true consciousness *(liángzhī)* and true potential *(liángnéng),* in the original state *(běnlái miànmù)* of being silent, still, and motionless *(bùdòng),* with perception unimpeded and universally penetrating.
>
> *Zhāng Bóduān, Wùzhēn piān, DZ141*

See also: **xūxīn** (8.5).

1. See "xin," *Encyclopedia of Taoism, ET2* p.1101.
2. Liú Yīmíng, *Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17.*

dar bāftan (P) *Lit.* to sew *(bāftan)* into *(dar);* to weave into, to intertwine; to weave fabric in such a way that there is a complete and inextricable commixture of threads; hence, to mingle, to dissolve; used metaphorically in Sufi literature

to convey the idea of the merging of the Divine in the humanity of a saint. Presenting Muḥammad as the perfect man, Rūmī compares him to the moon whose light is from the sun (God), but who is less bright than the sun so that human beings may be able to bear his brightness:

> The moon (Muḥammad) is saying to earth and cloud and shadow,
> "I am a man, I am one like you,
> but revelation has been given to me.[1]
> Like you, I was dark in nature:
> the sun's revelation gave me this light.
> I have a certain darkness
> in comparison with the spiritual suns,
> but I have brought light for the darkness of human souls.
> I am less bright so that you may bear it,
> for you are not one who can bear the most radiant sun.
> I am mingled *(dar bāftan)* like honey and vinegar
> so that I might find the way to cure your sickness of heart.
> Since you are recovering from your illness, O you in thrall,
> leave the vinegar and go on eating the honey!"
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī I:3659–64; cf. MJR2 pp.198–99*

He also says that by merging his lower individual self into the "non-individuality" of the Divine, he has found his true self:

> I found true individuality in non-individuality:
> Therefore, I wove *(dar bāftan)*
> my individuality into non-individuality.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī I:1735, MJR2 p.95*

1. *Qur'ān* 18:110, 41:6.

dark night A term coined by John of the Cross (1542–1591), to encompass a progression of experience in the life of a contemplative, from the dark night of sense to the dark night of the spirit, culminating in union with God.

In the dark night of sense, the soul realizes the depths of its sinfulness and its absorption in sensuality and materiality, and the process of purification begins. In the dark night of the spirit, the soul is further purified and prepared for union with the Divine. In both, the soul is being steadily stripped of its many layers of self and attachment to worldly things, so that ultimately God remains the sole object of its interest. The process can be painful, and can last for many years, since most souls start from a place of deep involvement with the self and with the world. During this time, the soul lives by faith

and longing for God, occasionally encouraged by periods of sweetness and spiritual grace that pierce through the clouds before they close once more.

The dark night generally begins after an initial period in which the soul has received an abundance of blissful states, though of a preparatory nature. Earlier 'certainties' are gradually replaced by a deep and abiding faith, as the soul is prepared for the final union.

Since the process of purification is a necessary aspect of all spiritual growth, and periods of dryness are common to followers of all spiritual paths, practitioners of the world's many religious traditions have commonly experienced something similar to the dark night described by St John. However, individual experience of a spiritual path is largely determined by a person's nature, beliefs, and expectations. Hence, the particulars of St John's description are clearly coloured by his own intellect and temperament, together with the character of medieval Catholic mysticism, with its emphasis on purgation. The latter is something that, by contrast, is absent from the Orthodox Church, Christianity's other major contemplative tradition. The degree to which an individual becomes absorbed in their own sinfulness and unworthiness is largely a matter of personal temperament, alleviated or exacerbated by religious belief and expectations.

As St John himself maintains, the divine union he describes is not the highest degree of union that can be experienced, although in his opinion, it is the highest that can be experienced while still in human life. It must also be admitted that his exposition is somewhat confounded by his frequent repetitions, his tangled style, and inconsistencies in his descriptions and use of his own terminology.

St John's book, the *Dark Night,* begins with a poem that opens, "On a dark night, kindled in love with yearnings", which St John then explains, line by line, his commentary occupying the bulk of his book. In the poem, he describes in metaphorical language the soul's journey from imperfect humanity to "the state of perfection, which is the union of love with God".[1] The dark night, he says at the outset, is the narrow road mentioned in *Matthew,* "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it":[2]

> Since this road … is so strait, and since there are so few that enter by it, the soul considers it a great happiness and good chance to have passed along it to the said perfection of love,… calling this strait road with full propriety 'dark night'.… The soul, then, rejoicing at having passed along this narrow road whence so many blessings have come to it, speaks after this manner.…
>
> *John of the Cross, Dark Night, Prologue, CWJC1 pp.326–27*

By this narrow road, he writes, the soul becomes detached "from itself and from all things". By "dying to them all and to itself, by means of true

mortification", it attains the "sweet and delectable life of love with God". The process of this detachment, he says, is a "dark night, by which … is understood purgative contemplation", which the spirit is able to undergo through the strength of its love for God.[3]

Souls entering this dark night are drawn by God from the "state of beginners" to that of "progressives", so that "they may arrive at the state of the perfect, which is that of divine union of the soul with God".[4] "Beginners," he adds, are those who meditate, while "progressives" are those who contemplate. By meditation, he means reflecting upon the various Christian doctrines, things read in religious books, and so on. Contemplation refers to the practice of interior prayer and stillness of mind.

When starting out upon the spiritual way, beginners generally bring with them a great many imperfections. As St John repeats in many places, the purpose of the dark night, by its "aridity and severity"[5] is to purge the soul of all such imperfections, which he details and explains at some length.

Beginners, he says, spend long periods, even whole nights, in prayer. They practise penances and fasts, and occupy themselves with the sacraments.[6] The dark night, "which is contemplation", is the path of the progressive. There are, he says, "two kinds of darkness" – the sensual and the spiritual. The dark night of sense or the sensual darkness refers to purgation of the senses and sensual desire, in which the senses are made subject to the spirit. In the dark night of the spirit, the soul is "purged and stripped, and subdued, … and made ready for the union of love with God". The latter is more painful than the former:

> The night of sense is common and comes to many: these are the beginners. … The night of the spirit is the portion of very few, and these are they that are already practised and proficient. The first purgation or night is bitter and terrible. … The second bears no comparison with it, for it is horrible and awful to the spirit.
>
> *John of the Cross, Dark Night 1:8.1–2, CWJC1 pp.349–50*

The primary benefit to be derived from the dark night of contemplation is self-knowledge:

> This is the first and principal benefit caused by this arid and dark night of contemplation: the knowledge of oneself and of one's misery.
>
> *John of the Cross, Dark Night 1:12.2, CWJC1 p.362*

St John speaks of the "dark night of the spirit" and the "dark night of contemplation" more or less synonymously. If there is a difference, it is that the former is used in a more general sense, and the latter for the spirit's experience during the practice of contemplation.

The aridity of the dark night of sense is to be borne with quietness and patience, trusting in God, "until He brings them into the clear and pure light of love", which "He will give them by means of that other dark night, that of the spirit".[7]

St John then talks about the dark night of the spirit. Having emerged from the dark night of sense, the soul may spend a long time, maybe many years, before being led into the dark night of the spirit:

> In this latter state, the soul is like one that is come forth from a narrow prison. It goes about the things of God with much greater freedom and satisfaction of the soul, and with more abundant and inward delight than it did at the beginning, before it entered the said night. For its imagination and faculties are no longer bound, as they were before, by meditation and anxiety of spirit, . . . since it now very readily finds in its spirit the most serene and loving contemplation and spiritual sweetness without the labour of meditation.
>
> *John of the Cross, Dark Night 2:1.1; cf. CWJC1 p.374*

By "meditation", he means reflection and consideration of aspects of Christian faith. At length, the soul is led to a more perfect contemplation:

> This dark night is an inflowing of God into the soul, which purges it from its habitual ignorances and imperfections, natural and spiritual, and which contemplatives call infused contemplation or mystical theology. Herein, God secretly teaches the soul and instructs it in perfection of love, without its doing anything, or understanding the nature of this infused contemplation.
>
> *John of the Cross, Dark Night 2:5.1; cf. CWJC1 p.381, WSJ1 pp.380–81*

All this, he says, is due to the loving wisdom of God, which now begins to illuminate the soul:

> The same loving wisdom that purges the blessed spirits and enlightens them is that which here purges the soul and illumines it.
>
> *John of the Cross, Dark Night 2:5.1; cf. CWJC1 p.381*

Why, he then asks, is the divine light that "illumines and purges the soul" here known as the "dark night"? It is, he answers, because the divine wisdom is so much higher than the soul that by comparison with the divine light, the soul seems dark, just as one is blinded by looking into the sun; moreover, the soul becomes increasingly aware of its "vileness and impurity", which is both painful and dark.[8] Even so:

> So immense is the spiritual light of God, and so greatly does it transcend our natural understanding, that the nearer we approach it, the more it blinds and darkens us.
>
> *John of the Cross, Dark Night 2:16.11, CWJC1 pp.425–26*

At this advanced stage, the "dark night of contemplation consists of divine light and love",[9] "enkindling" the sweetness of love within the soul:

> This type of enkindling will explain to us certain of the delectable effects which this dark night of contemplation works in the soul. For at certain times,… the soul becomes enlightened in the midst of all this darkness, and the light shines in the darkness.
>
> *John of the Cross, Dark Night 2:13.1, CWJC1 p.413*

And again:

> In these spiritual blessings, which are passively infused by God into the soul, the will may very well love even though the understanding understand not, and similarly the understanding may understand and the will love not.…
>
> This mystical intelligence flows down into the understanding, and the will to some extent partakes of it, with a serenity and simplicity which are so delicate and delectable to the sense of the soul that no name can be given to them. Thus, the presence of God is felt, now after one manner, now after another.
>
> *John of the Cross, Dark Night 2:12.7, 13.1, CWJC1 pp.412–13*

St John is trying to describe, one presumes, the varieties of his own mystical experience, and unless one has known similar experiences it is difficult to relate to what he is saying, except in intellectual and conceptual terms.

All in all, he writes that in this stage, the soul walks securely in this darkness, drawing its confidence from the divine wisdom:

> For in such a way does this dark night of contemplation absorb and immerse the soul in itself, and so near does it bring the soul to God. For this soul is now, as it were, undergoing a cure, in order that it may regain its health – its health being God Himself.
>
> *John of the Cross, Dark Night 2:16.10, CWJC1 p.425*

Finally, he says, commenting on the verse, "Oh, happy night", there are three primary characteristics of the spiritual night of the soul in this advanced stage. Firstly:

> In this happy night of contemplation, God leads the soul by a manner of contemplation so solitary and secret, so remote and far distant from sense, that naught pertaining to it, nor any touch of created things, succeeds in approaching the soul in such a way as to disturb it and detain it on the road of the union of love.
>
> *John of the Cross, Dark Night 2:25, Exposition 2, CWJC1 p.456*

Here, the soul remains rapt in deep contemplation, the world forgotten, focused entirely upon the divine presence.

Secondly, the soul journeys unimpeded by any faculties that would hinder its "uniting with the eternal being of God"; and thirdly, it is moved and guided by its love and longing for the divine Beloved, which "makes it to soar upward to its God along the road of solitude, without its knowing how or in what manner".[10]

And here, sadly, the only extant manuscripts end abruptly, and the remaining commentary on his poem is lost. Some of the relevant verses of the remainder of the poem, to which the commentary is missing, read:

> In the happy night, in secret, when none saw me,
> nor I beheld aught, without light or guide,
> save that which burned in my heart.
>
> This light guided me more surely than the light of noonday
> to the place where He (well I knew who!)
> was awaiting me – a place where none appeared.
>
> Oh, night that guided me,
> Oh, night more lovely than the dawn,
> Oh, night that joined Beloved with lover,
> lover transformed in the Beloved!
>
> *John of the Cross, Dark Night, Stanzas 3–5, CWJC1 pp.325–26*

Although many have written learnedly of St John's 'dark night', it is clear that confusion still abounds regarding the details of his meaning.

See also: **cloud of unknowing**, **divine darkness**, **mystical theology**.

1. John of the Cross, *Dark Night* 1:1, *Prologue; cf. CWJC1* pp.325–26.
2. *Matthew* 7:14; *cf. KJV.*
3. John of the Cross, *Dark Night* 1:1, *Exposition* 1, *CWJC1* p.329.
4. John of the Cross, *Dark Night* 1:1.1, *CWJC1* p.330.
5. John of the Cross, *Dark Night* 1:5.1, *CWJC1* p.342.

6. John of the Cross, *Dark Night* 1:1.3, *CWJC1* p.330.
7. John of the Cross, *Dark Night* 1:10.3, *CWJC1* p.357.
8. John of the Cross, *Dark Night* 2:5.2, *CWJC1* pp.381–82.
9. John of the Cross, *Dark Night* 2:12.7, *CWJC1* p.412.
10. John of the Cross, *Dark Night* 2:25, *Exposition* 3–4, *CWJC1* pp.456–57.

dar pīr bākhtan (P) *Lit. dar* (in) + *pīr* (master, *shaykh*) + *bākhtan* (to lose, to give, to bestow); to lose oneself in the *pīr,* annihilation in the master. ʿAyn al-Quḍāt Hamadānī explains:

> Know that, in general terms, the disciple *(murīd)* is one who loses himself in the master *(dar pīr bāzad).* First, he loses his religion and then himself. Do you know the meaning of 'losing one's religion'? It means that if the spiritual master commands him to contradict and disregard the dictates of his own religion, the disciple obeys. If the disciple, in order to conform with his master's directives does not act contrary to his own religion, he is still a disciple of his own personal religion, not his master's disciple. If the disciple pursues the course of his own desires, he is a self-worshipper and an egotist. To really be a disciple is to adore the master, and to gird oneself with the girdle of almighty God and his Prophet (peace be upon him!).
>
> *ʿAyn al-Quḍāt Hamadānī, Tamhīdāt, TQH (Introduction) pp.98–99, in HSL1 p.307*

See also: **fanā**ʾ.

darshan(a) (S/H), **dassana** (Pa), **daras** (H/Pu), **darsan** (Pu) *Lit.* seeing, looking at, observing, noticing; vision, sight; thus, audience, meeting; observation, perception, insight; viewpoint, opinion, perspective, philosophy; inner, spiritual, or mystical vision; from the root *d-ṛi-sh* (to see, to look at, to know, to discern); in spiritual and religious contexts, the vision of a deity or God; audience with or sight of a *guru* or holy person, within or without; the sight of an image or idol of a deity in a temple; looking at a holy man or idol with devotion and reverence, and with such absorption that everything else, even one's own body, is forgotten, and the sense of a separate existence is lost.

Darshana has a spectrum of associated meanings, broadly focused around three main topics. Firstly, it means perception and vision; secondly, it refers to philosophy, opinion, or viewpoint; and thirdly, it is devotional gazing at a holy man, or at an idol or image of a holy man or deity. The latter meaning is prevalent in Hindu and Jain traditions, but not in Buddhism.

Even within the mystical, religious and philosophical context, *darshana* has a wide spread of meaning. The six schools of Indian philosophy are known

as the *shaḍ-darshanas* – the six viewpoints: *Nyāya, Vaisheshika, Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā,* and *Vedānta.* It also appears in a variety of expressions. *Ātma-darshana* (vision of the self) is used synonymously with *ātma-jñāna* (self-knowledge, self-realization).[1] Patañjali lists *bhranti-darshana* (false vision, incorrect understanding, erroneous perception, illusion) as one of the nine inner obstacles *(antarāya)* that disturb the mind on the path of *yoga.*[2] The *Linga Purāṇa* explains *bhranti-darshana* as false understanding concerning the nature of the spiritual goal, and one's *guru,* knowledge, conduct, and God.[3] *Dūra-darshana* (far-sightedness) is an alternative term for *divya-chakshus* (divine eye) – the faculty of inner or spiritual vision. *Siddha-darshana,* the direct perception or mystical vision of adepts or perfected ones, is said by Patañjali to be acquired by *saṃyama* (deep meditation) upon the "light in the head".[4] The *Shiva Saṃhitā* says that *siddha-darshana* is acquired through concentration of the attention at the heart *chakra,* where the practitioner "has the *darshana* of the *siddhas,* and the goddesses known as *yoginīs*".[5]

The *Shiva Purāṇa* also describes *darshana* ("the ability to see all divine objects without difficulty") as one of the six *siddhis* (supernatural powers) that stand as obstacles *(upasarga)* to success in *yoga.*[6] *Sama-darshana* (same, equal, or even vision, impartiality) is said in the *Bhagavad Gītā* to be characteristic of one who is established in *yoga,* who sees the divine Self *(Ātmā)* in all beings and all beings in the Self.[7] "In the state of omniscience and perfection," says Patañjali, "there is vision of the divine Being *(Purusha-darshana)* in the universe, and vision *(darshana)* of the entire universe in the divine Being *(Purusha).*"[8]

Samyag-darshana (complete vision, right understanding) is mystical or inner vision. According to the *Yoga Bhāshya, samyag-darshana* is the way to liberation from suffering, after elimination of its five causes (*kleshas,* impurities).[9] The *Manu Smṛiti* maintains that a person with *samyag-darshana* is not bound by his deeds or *karma.*[10]

The *Maitrī Upanishad* says that the appearances of this world are the result of *mithyā-darshana* (wrong seeing, false vision) – "it delights the mind, but deceptively".[11] *Mithyā-darshana* also means an incorrect perception of things in a more general sense, such as incorrect opinions, prejudice, pretension, or putting on a deceitful show. *Darshana* is also the name of one of the minor *Upanishads.*

Darshana is a major term in Jain philosophy (itself known as *Jaina darshana*). A *jīva* (embodied soul) is said to consist of *chaitanya* and *upayoga* – of pure consciousness and the drive to perceive and to understand. *Upayoga* consists of perception *(darshana)* and knowledge *(jñāna).* Pure perception without any analysis comes first, followed by the desire to acquire knowledge of whatever is perceived. A *jīva* first perceives something, becomes aware of its existence, and then tries to make sense of it. The process

is so rapid and automatic that it may seem as if the two are simultaneous. Nevertheless, there is always a reaction time between perception and the assimilation and recognition of the nature of the perception. In this context, *darshana* is perception *per se,* without any cogitation thereon or consideration of the attributes of the thing perceived.

According to the Jain understanding of *karma,* perception *(darshana)* is obscured by *darshana-āvaraṇa karma* (perception-obscuring *karma*), just as knowledge *(jñāna)* is obscured by *jñāna-āvaraṇa karma* (knowledge-obscuring *karma*). In this context, *darshana* is generally understood to mean the ability to understand the right path and teachings *(i.e.* the Jain path of the *Tīrthankaras).* This 'right viewpoint', 'right belief' or 'right faith' is known as *samyag-darshana,* and it constitutes the first of the three foundations of the Jain path. As Āchārya Umāswāmī (*c.*C1st–2nd CE) writes in the opening verses of his *Tattvārtha Sūtra:*

> Right viewpoint *(samyag-darshana),* (right) knowledge *(jñāna)* and (right) conduct *(chāritra)* constitute the path to liberation *(moksha).* Right viewpoint *(samyag-darshana)* means faith *(shraddhāna)* in the ascertainment of 'Things-as-they-are *(Tattvārtha)*' (*i.e.* Reality).
>
> *Āchārya Umāswāmī, Tattvārtha Sūtra 1:1–2*

Darshana-āvaraṇa karma is hence understood to mean the *karma* that stands in the way of seeing things correctly and adopting the right faith. The converse of *samyag-darshana* is *mithyā-darshana* (wrong viewpoint, wrong belief, erroneous understanding). Umāswāmī begins his chapter on *karma* with the verse:

> Wrong belief *(mithyā-darshana),* lack of self-discipline *(avirati),* spiritual negligence *(pramāda),* passions *(kashāya)* and activity (of mind, body, and speech) are the causes of bondage *(bandha).*
>
> *Āchārya Umāswāmī, Tattvārtha Sūtra 8:1*

Mithyā-darshana arises from the presence of *darshana-mohanīya karma* (perception-deluding *karma*). In all, Jainism describes eight main forms of *karma* that obscure the various faculties and attributes of living beings, and determine various aspects of individual destiny. These eight are then subdivided into numerous further categories.

Four modes of perception are described. *Chaitanya* (consciousness) in conjunction with *darshana* and *jñāna* result in conscious awareness of phenomena. In this context, *darshana* includes more than mere sense perception. Extrasensory and mystical perception are also included. The four kinds of *darshana* mentioned by Kundakunda (traditionally dated to C2nd–3rd CE), each with their own kind of obscuring *karma,* are:[12]

1. *Chakshu-darshana.* Perception through the eyes; visual perception.

2. *Achakshu-darshana.* Non-visual perception; perception of things through the mind and non-visual senses.

3. *Avadhi-darshana.* Perception with limit *(avadhi),* which is perception beyond the range of the physical senses and which, together with *avadhi-jñāna* (knowledge with limit), results in faculties such as telepathy and clairvoyance.

4. *Kevala-darshana.* Absolute *(kevala)* perception, which together with *kevala-jñāna* (absolute knowledge, omniscience) provides a *kevalin* (omniscient soul) with complete conscious awareness of everything; also called *ananta-darshana* (infinite perception, infinite vision). It is the most spiritually elevated level of perception, attained only after liberation from karmic bondage. Kundakunda writes that it "is unlimited and apprehends all reality".

The highest *darshana* is therefore an entirely internal, spiritual experience, something that philosophy can only talk about. Although the basics of the Jain understanding of *darshana* (and other terms) are generally agreed, scholars and others have expressed diverse opinions regarding the interpretation and shades of meaning given to the various terms.

In Buddhism, in addition to its general meaning as vision or perception, *darshana* refers to insight into Reality or into the various formulations of Buddhist doctrine, such as the well-known noble eightfold path *(āryāshṭānga-mārga)* or the four noble truths *(ārya-satya)* of early Buddhism. Pre-*Mahāyāna* Buddhism generally speaks of the five paths *(pañcha-mārga)* to buddhahood that are traversed by an aspiring seeker. Of these, *darshana-mārga* (path of seeing) is the third *mārga,* the stage at which uncertainty *(vichikitsā),* false views or opinions *(mithyā-darshana* or *mithyā-dṛishṭi),* and impurities *(kleshas)* are eliminated. *Jñāna-darshana* (knowledge-insight) refers to direct mystical perception and understanding of Buddhist truths, especially that of *nirvāṇa.* Many other compound terms are formed that include *darshana.*

See also: **darshana** (7.5), **dṛishṭi**, **jñāna**, **upayoga**.

1. Patañjali, *Yoga Sūtras* 2:41.
2. Patañjali, *Yoga Sūtras* 1:30.
3. *Linga Purāṇa* 1:9.7.
4. Patañjali, *Yoga Sūtras* 3:33.
5. *Shiva Saṃhitā* 5:87; *cf. SSV* p.67.
6. *Shiva Purāṇa* 4:38.10, 13, *SPS4* p.2076.

7. *Bhagavad Gītā* 6:29.
8. Patañjali, *Yoga Sūtras* 4:34.
9. *Yoga Bhāshya* 2:15.
10. *Manu Smṛiti* 6:74.
11. *Maitrī Upanishad* 4:2.
12. See Kundakunda, *Pañchāstikāyasāra* 42, *PBCK* p.40.

dasha-jñāna (S) *Lit.* ten *(dashan)* knowledges *(jñāna);* ten forms of knowledge, drawn from the Buddhist Pali *suttas* and classified by the Sanskrit *Abhidharma.*

The ten knowledges, elaborated in the *Abhidharma,* are drawn from groupings found in the Pali *suttas,* where they are simply listed rather than explained. The first four are concerned specifically with the mundane world:[1]

1. *Dharma-jñāna* (S), *dhamma-ñāṇa* (Pa). Knowledge of things *(dharma)* as they relate to *kāmaloka* (realm of desire, *i.e.* hell, this world, and the lower heavens); knowledge of material and mental phenomena *(saṃskāras)* in *kāmaloka,* in relation to their existence, origin, cessation, and the path leading to their cessation.

2. *Anvaya-jñāna* (S), *anvaya-ñāṇa* (Pa). Knowledge of consequences *(anvaya);* knowledge of material and mental phenomena in the realm of *rūpaloka* (realm of forms, patterns, or archetypes) and *arūpaloka* (formless realm), in relation to the existence, origin, cessation, and the path leading to their cessation.

3. *Para-chitta-jñāna* (S), *para-citta-ñāṇa* (Pa). Knowledge of another's *(para)* thoughts *(chitta).*

4. *Saṃvṛiti-jñāna* (S), *sammuti-ñāṇa* (Pa). Conventional *(saṃvṛiti)* knowledge; mundane, worldly, or 'impure' knowledge.

The second four relate to the four noble truths and constitute what is called 'right view (S. *samyak-dṛishṭi,* Pa. *sammā-diṭṭhi*)':[2]

5. *Duḥkha-jñāna* (S), *dukkha-ñāṇa* (Pa). Knowledge of the existence of suffering *(duḥkha);* awareness that the five *skandhas* (physical and mental 'aggregates' that comprise a human being) are impermanent, a source of suffering, and lack any self or identity.

6. *Samudāya-jñāna* (S), *samudāya-ñāṇa* (Pa). Knowledge of the origin *(samudāya)* of suffering; awareness of the cause of suffering.

7. *Nirodha-jñāna* (S), *nirodha-ñāṇa* (Pa). Knowledge of the cessation *(nirodha)* of suffering; awareness that the cessation of suffering results in peace and liberation.

8. *Mārga-jñāna* (S), *magga-ñāṇa, nirodha-gāmini paṭipadā-ñāṇa* (Pa). Knowledge of the path *(mārga)* or way of practice *(paṭipadā)* that leads *(gāmini)* to the cessation *(nirodha)* of suffering; awareness of the path as the clear way to liberation.

The third group consists of two knowledges relating to the *arhat* (enlightened one):[3]

9. *Kshaya-jñāna* (S), *khaya-ñāṇa* (Pa). Knowledge regarding the destruction *(kshaya)* of the impurities; certainty that the impurities have been eliminated; awareness that the four noble truths have been completely understood.

10. *Anutpāda-jñāna* (S), *anuppāda-ñāṇa* (Pa). Knowledge of the non-recurrence *(anutpāda)* of impurities in the future; certainty that the impurities will not arise again; awareness that the four noble truths have been so completely realized that nothing more is left to be done.

These ten are listed together in a number of places among the *Abhidharma* texts, to which an eleventh has been added in later *Mahāyāna* texts:

11. *Yathābhūta-jñāna* (S), *yathābhūta-ñāṇa* (Pa). Knowledge of things *(bhūta)* just as they are *(yathā);* knowledge that conforms to Reality; complete awareness and knowledge of all things, both their general characteristics as well as their details; the wisdom and awareness of a *buddha.*

Explanations of the ten and eleven *jñānas* vary to some extent among different texts, both *Abhidharma* and *Mahāyāna.*[4]

See also: **jñāna**.

1. For Pali sources, see: *Saṃyutta Nikāya* 12:33, *Ñāṇavatthu Sutta, PTSS2* p.58; *Dīgha Nikāya* 33, *Sangīti Sutta, PTSD3* p.226; *Vibhanga, VCRD* pp.315, 330.
2. For Pali sources, see: *Dīgha Nikāya* 22 *(Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta),* 33 *(Sangīti Sutta), PTSD2* p.312, *PTSD3* p.227; *Majjhima Nikāya* 141, *Saccavibhanga Sutta, PTSM3* p.251; *Saṃyutta Nikāya* 45:8 *(Vibhanga Sutta),* 56:18 *(Vijjā Sutta), PTSS5* pp.8–9, 430; *Paṭisambhidāmagga* 1:1.242, *PTSP1* pp.41, 118, 133; *Vibhanga, VCRD* pp.104, 235, 293, 315, 328.

3. For Pali sources, see: *Dīgha Nikāya* 33 *(Sangīti Sutta),* 34 *(Dasuttara Sutta), PTSD3* pp.214, 274.
4. For a full breakdown of the various explanations of the ten and eleven *jñānas,* see Nāgārjuna, *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Shāstra* 38, *T25* 1509:232c–34a, *TVW3* pp.1206–18, and the preliminary note by Étienne Lamotte, *TVW3* pp.1200–6.

dast afshāndan (P) *Lit.* waving *(afshāndan)* the hands *(dast);* from *fishāndan* (to scatter); tossing up the hands; dancing; symbolizes the abandonment of this world and the next; rising above both this world and the next in a state of ecstasy. On the path of the beloved, the seeker cares for nothing but the beloved:

> O idol of graceful movements,
> rise up and show us your height!
> So that, tossing up our hands *(dast afshāndan)* in rapture,
> we rise above ourselves and the world.
>
> *Ḥāfiz, Dīvān, DHA p.203; cf. in SSE1 p.177*

See also: **pāy kōftan** (8.4).

dédào (C) *Lit.* to attain *(dé)* the *Dào;* to achieve or receive the *Dào;* realization of the *Dào,* mastery of the *Dào;* hence, to become an immortal *(xiān).*

In his *Vegetable Roots Discourses,* master Hóng Zìchéng (C16th) uses down-to-earth images to convey the importance of perseverance in spiritual practice ("explorations") should a practitioner wish to accomplish the goal of mastering the *Dào.* With persistence, effort will bear fruit:

> With time, a rope can saw through a block of wood, and dripping water can bore a hole in a rock. In the same way, he who cultivates the Way *(Dào)* must constantly exert himself in this endeavour. Where water flows, a channel is formed. When a melon is ripe, it parts from the stem. Thus, to attain the *Dào (dédào),* just submit to the mysteries of heaven.
>
> *Hóng Zìchéng, Càigēntán 335, CGT; cf. TRW p.335*

An inscription carved into rock (*bēi,* monument) in the year 829 CE at Mount Wángwū, in what is now the Chinese province of Hénán, speaks of *dédào* through *nèidān* (inner alchemy), the Daoist process of spiritual refinement that involves the transmutation of *jīng* (vital force or essence) into *qì* (subtle life energy), and thence into spirit *(shén).* The inscription, which summarizes the teachings of master Sīmǎ Chéngzhēn (C8th), begins:

> My late master told me that sitting in forgetfulness (*zuòwàng,* meditation) is the foundation of eternal life *(chángshēng).* Thus, we harbour truth to refine the body *(liànxíng, i.e.* the vital essence or *jīng);* once the body is pure, we merge with *qì* (life energy). To refine *qì (liànqì),* we embrace the *Dào;* once *qì* is pure, we merge with the spirit *(shén).* When one's entire being (*tǐ,* embodiment) is absorbed in the *Dào,* we speak of 'realizing the *Dào (dédào)*'.
>
> *Zhāng Hóngmíng, Zuòwàng piān, in Dàoshū, DZ1017 2:7a, SCJS; cf. SSTK p.113*

Here, "sitting in forgetfulness *(zuòwàng)*" – a term used at least as far back as the third century BCE in the *Zhuāngzǐ* – refers to a technique in which a meditator stills the mind by eliminating all forms of mental activity. The mind, becoming completely clear and empty, everything else being forgotten, is therefore fully receptive to the *Dào.*

In his *Scripture on Concentration and Observation,* master Sīmǎ Chéngzhēn (C8th CE) offers advice to seekers of the *Dào:*

> If you want to cultivate the *Dào (xiūdào),* you must let go of worldly things. Detach yourself from everything in the outside world so that nothing can disturb your mind. Then you can practise meditation *(zuò)* in peace. . . .
>
> Let old habits fade away; accumulate no new ones. Let nothing contaminate or hinder you. Shed the dust and throw off the cage. Practise this long enough, and you will automatically attain the *Dào (dédào).*
>
> *Sīmǎ Chéngzhēn, Dìngguān jīng, DZ400 1b–2a, JY35 5b; cf. TTW pp.132, 134*

The rare person who has attained the *Dào* is a 'true man *(zhēnrén)*' – one who has restored his original inner nature. Perfectly focused, his inner oneness remains undisturbed, while outwardly adapting readily to change. Going about in the world, such a person adjusts to changing circumstances with naturalness and spontaneity *(zìrán),* readily accommodating others through selfless behaviour (*wúwéi,* non-action), without contrivance or contention:

> Those who have attained the *Dào (dédào)* change outwardly, but inwardly remain unchanged. In changing outwardly, they act like any other human being. Inwardly unchanging, they keep themselves whole. Having inner stability, they are able to adapt outwardly to things by contracting or expanding, swelling or shrinking, bending or straightening. Therefore, they do not fail in anything they do.
>
> *Huáinánzǐ 18, DZ1184*

An eighteenth-century hermit known by his Daoist name Yǎngzhēnzǐ ('Master who Cultivates Reality') laments that few people attain the *Dào.* He says this

is not because attaining the *Dào* is difficult, but because people are either unaware of the *Dào* or do not keep their attention focused on it:

> Nowadays, those who attain the *Dào (dédào)* are rare. It is not that the *Dào* is difficult to attain; it is because people are not really aware of it or they do not preserve it securely.
>
> *Yǎngzhēnzǐ, Yǎngzhēn jí, JY241*

See also **Dào** (▸1).

deliverance Rescue; spiritually and religiously, deliverance from duality, illusion, pain, suffering, evil, mortality, death, sin, the consequences of sin, and so on; hence, redemption, salvation, emancipation, liberation; in some religions, restoration of the soul to a higher realm or state of being; sometimes, deliverance from the cycle of birth and death; in Christianity, deliverance by redemption from the power of sin and its consequences, from hell and from the machinations of the devil, by faith in Christ, the saviour, who – through crucifixion – took upon himself the "sin of the world".[1]

Although used synonymously with salvation, the term is more often used in the more restricted sense of deliverance from pain, suffering, misfortune, danger, tribulations, evil, sin, human imperfection, and so on. The latter imply deliverance from the power of the devil, the "Evil One", as in the Lord's prayer:

> And lead us not into temptation,
> but deliver us from the Evil One.
>
> *Matthew 6:13, NIV*

Many Christian uses of the term echo its use in the Lord's prayer. In the *Acts of Thomas,* Judas Thomas expands on the theme:

> I have been freed from evil cares and from deeds of corruption,
> and have been delivered from him who was alluring me,
> and inciting me to do those things in which you found me,
> and have understood Him who was telling me their opposite. . . .
> I have been delivered from him whom deception supports,
> and before whom goes a veil (of ignorance and darkness),
> and after whom comes shame.
>
> *Acts of Thomas III; cf. AAA pp.175–76*

Again, after giving baptism to a group of aspirants, Judas Thomas invokes his master's blessings upon them, praying for their deliverance from "error". By this he means the web of illusion and deception spun by the devil in this world:

Deliver your people from error,
freeing from corruption, from fear and from slavery,
those who obey you, and come to your place of refuge.
Acts of Thomas VII; cf. AAA p.205, MAA pp.226–27

The same allusions are present in the *Philokalia:*

Pray first for the purification of the passions; secondly, for deliverance from ignorance and forgetfulness; and thirdly, for deliverance *(rysthēnai)* from all temptation, trial, and dereliction.
Evagrios Pontikos, On Prayer 38, Philokalia, PCT1 p.60

The consequence of such deliverance, says Mark the Ascetic, is peace, which comes through the working of the Holy Spirit:

Peace is deliverance *(apallagē)* from the passions and is not found except through the action of the Holy Spirit.
Mark the Ascetic, On the Spiritual Law 192, Philokalia, PCT1 p.123

The unknown writer of the *Odes of Solomon* points to God Himself as the ultimate source of his deliverance:

I was rescued from my bonds
and unto Thee, my God, I fled;
For Thou art the Right Hand of my deliverance,
and my Helper.
Odes of Solomon 25:1–2, OSD p.114

In Luke's gospel, Jesus reads out a passage from *Isaiah,*[2] which highlights the role of the messiah as deliverer:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to preach the gospel to the poor;
He has sent me to heal the broken-hearted,
to preach deliverance *(aphesis)* to the captives,
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty *(aphesis)* them that are bruised,
to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.
Luke 4:18–19; cf. KJV

Among the Manichaeans, the saint or saviour was the deliverer of souls ("natures of light") from bondage to bodies, oppressed and troubled in the

cycle of birth and death – souls who have been robbed of their innate spiritual wealth. As a Manichaean hymn from Chinese Turkestan says:

> The great saint *(dàshèng)* is …
> the gate of liberation *(jiětuō)* for all doers of good,
> deliverance *(jiù)* for the robbed,
> liberty *(jiě)* for the entangled and bound,
> ease and peace for the oppressed,
> joy and happiness for the troubled and afflicted.
> He comforts and heals all those who uphold filial piety,
> and reanimates all natures of light.
> *Mónǐjiào xiàbù zàn, T54 2140:1270c17–24; cf. LSMH (15, 17–18) p.177*

Deliverance from human evils is an ancient idea, present in the teachings of the Greek mystics. Hieroclēs, a Pythagorean from early Christian times, writes that most men have lost contact with God within themselves, and no longer know how to be inwardly free of human imperfections and the problems of life:

> They who endeavour to find of themselves, or to learn from others, the things that are truly good, are those of whom the poet (Pythagoras) says "that they know how to deliver themselves from their evils", and who, by avoiding the troubles and labours of this world, transport themselves into the pure and free *aether* (the spiritual realms). The number of these is very small, for by far the greatest part of men are wicked slaves to their passions, and in a manner run mad through the violence of their propensity to the things of this world.
>
> And this evil they have brought upon themselves by having wilfully departed from God and deprived themselves of His presence and, if I may say so, of the familiarity with Him which they had the happiness to enjoy when they inhabited the mansions of pure and unclouded light. Now the fate that blinds mankind and takes away their senses is a mark of their departure from God.
>
> *Hieroclēs, On the Golden Verses of Pythagoras 54–60; cf. HVP pp.108–9*

He adds that the only solution is to "return to God":

> The only way to be delivered from all these evils is to return to God; and only those enjoy this return who have the eyes and ears of the soul always open to recovery of the things that are truly good; and who by the faculty they have of raising themselves up to God, have healed the evil that is inherent in our nature.
>
> *Hieroclēs, On the Golden Verses of Pythagoras 54–60; cf. HVP p.110*

See also: **deliverer** (7.1), **salvation**, **yeshuʿa**.

1. *John* 1:29, *KJV;* see also *John* 4:42, 6:51.
2. *Isaiah* 61:1–2.

devekut (He) *Lit.* clinging, cleaving, attachment; intense attachment and devotion to God; from the verb *davak* (to cling, to adhere), as in *devek* (glue); also, union with God.

In the Bible, verb forms of *devekut* imply an intense attachment to the Divine. As Moses points out to the Israelites, those who were unfaithful to the commandments of God *(Yahweh)* and became followers of the Baʿal of Peʿor were all "wiped out",[1]

> but you that did cleave *(davak)* unto the Lord your God are alive every one of you this day.
>
> *Deuteronomy 4:4; cf. KB*

Later, when Moses is informing the Israelites of the "words of the covenant" that God has commanded him to convey,[2] he urges them to "cleave *(davak)*" to God – to always remain devoted to the one God:

> I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before you life or death, blessing or curse. Therefore, choose life, that both you and your descendants may live, that you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cleave *(davak)* to Him; for He is your life and the length of your days.
>
> *Deuteronomy 30:20; cf. JB, JCL*

In *2 Kings,* the devotion of Hosheʿa, one of the early Israelite kings, is described as 'holding fast *(davak)*' to the Lord and obeying Him implicitly. He is said to have taken the people away from idols and snake worship:

> He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father did. He removed the high places, and broke the pillars, and cut down the groves *(asherah),* and broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made; for until that time the children of Israel had offered sacrifices to it, and it was called *Neḥushtan.* He trusted in the Lord God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor among those that were before him. For he held fast *(davak)* to the Lord, departed not from following Him, but kept his commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses; and the Lord was with him.
>
> *2 Kings 18:1–7; cf. KB, NJB*

Among the medieval kabbalists and late eighteenth-century *ḥasidim, devekut* was used to mean communion with or intense cleaving to God. It is a direct, mystical, personal experience that comes about through prayer, meditation, and inner contemplation on the Divine. Hence, the sage and mystic Moses Naḥmanides (1194–1270) discusses a biblical passage that instructs human beings "to love the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways, and to cleave unto Him":[3]

> Man is to worship God alone in his heart and his actions. And it is plausible that the meaning of 'cleaving *(devekut)*' is to remember God and His love constantly, not to divert your thought from Him in all your earthly doings. Such a man may be talking to other people, but his heart is not with them since he is in the presence of God. And it is further plausible that those who have attained this rank do, even in their earthly life, partake of the eternal life, because they have made themselves a dwelling place of the *Shekhinah* (divine presence).
>
> *Moses Naḥmanides, Commentary on Deuteronomy 11:22, RDMN; cf. in MIJS p.205*

Naḥmanides believed that attaching oneself to God through remembrance and love is a commandment binding on everyone – that the worshipper should cultivate the feeling of being in the divine presence at all times. As the philosopher and historian Gershom Scholem (1897–1982) explains:

> (These are people) who abandon the affairs of this world and pay no regard to this world at all, as though they were not corporeal beings, but all their intent and purpose is fixed on their Creator alone, as in the case of Elijah and Enoch, who live on forever in body and soul, after having attained communion of their souls with the Great Name (the Name of God).
>
> *Gershom Scholem, Messianic Idea in Judaism, MIJS p.204*

Scholem (among others) believed that the state of *devekut* does not refer to divine union, but rather to a state of communion, which is a lesser experience of the Divine. However, most contemporary scholars have presented evidence that, since medieval times, mystic union has indeed been discussed in the writings of Jewish mystics. This is a significant theological point because it was once regarded as blasphemous in Judaism to think that a person – an imperfect corporeal being – could unite with God; for only God is perfect, and a human being could not expect to come to His level. However, as further research and more mystical writings have come to light, it is clear that the experience of mystical union has been described by Jewish mystics of the late- and post-medieval period. Often, it is depicted in a manner similar to that of many of the Muslim mystics. Since Jews and Muslims lived together

in close proximity, it is understandable that they would have shared similar terminology regarding mystical experience and philosophy.

In present times, the desire for union with the Divine is understood among Jews to be a valid expression of mystic longing and experience. It is not the body, but the soul – which is of the essence of God and a particle of the holy spirit – that longs to be reunited with its source in God. This theme recurs in the writings of mystics from medieval through to modern times. That said, while some mystical writings speak explicitly of union, some seem to refer to a level of communion that is short of absolute union. But often it is difficult to tell what is intended, since *devekut,* like many mystical terms, can be understood on many levels.

During the fourteenth century, Isaac of Akko, who is known to have had contact with the Sufis, wrote of his experience of *devekut* as an experience in which the Lord Himself pulls the devotee towards Himself. Using the image of a cow suckling her calf, he says that the Lord longs for the devotee even more than the devotee longs for the Lord:

> I, the young one, Isaac from Akko, went to hear the blessing of circumcision, and (while there) I saw the secret of the fire that consumes fire.… And the secret of this consumption is true *devekut.*… If you pursue the *muskalot* (spiritual realities) and grasp them, if they are held and engraved in (your soul) – then this is certainly the secret of consumption.… And of this *devekut,* it is said, "Taste and see that God is good."[4] Attach yourself to the divine Consciousness (*Sekhel,* the outflowing divine creative power) and He will attach Himself to (your soul), for more than the calf wants to suckle, the cow wants to nurse. She (the soul) and the (divine) Consciousness *(Sekhel)* become one entity, like one who pours a pitcher of water into a flowing spring, such that everything becomes one.… This is the secret of a fire that consumes fire.
>
> *Isaac of Akko, Oẓar Ḥayyim, OHIA fol.111a; cf. in LBDF p.281*

As Isaac's translator remarks, this *devekut* is

> an attachment that is nothing less than a complete and utter unification with the divine realm. The mystic is devoured into the divine self as the larger fire consumes the smaller fire, as the larger body of water consumes the water emptied into its stream.… For in the ultimate ascent of the mystic to the divine realm, the separate identity of the human being is erased, morphing into the larger supernal dimension.… In so doing – in "tasting" and "eating" of the divine Reality – he himself has been tasted and consumed by the Deity.
>
> *Eitan Fishbane, As Light Before Dawn, LBDF pp.281–82*

Earlier in his study of Isaac's writings, his translator also says:

> The mystical experience parallels and prefigures that which will take place after death – the moment of *devekut* is characterized as a departure from the realm of mortal life, a restoration to the original state of the soul before it was cast into the prison of the corporeal world.
>
> *Eitan Fishbane, As Light Before Dawn, LBDF p.275*

Isaac taught that, through this process of *devekut,* the soul *(nefesh)* reaches and becomes attached to the "divine Consciousness *(Sekhel ha-elohi)*", the creative energy of the Divine. Then the soul unites with and becomes the divine Consciousness itself:

> (Then) the soul returns to its root and foundation, and is actually called the divine Consciousness *(Sekhel ha-elohi)* – and such a person is called a 'divine man'.
>
> *Isaac of Akko, Me'irat 'Einayim, MEIA p.223; cf. in LBDF p.279*

While using *devekut* for concentrated devotion and longing for the Divine, the sixteenth-century kabbalists of Safed in northern Israel also sought precedents in the teachings of earlier Jewish mystics. Eleazar Azikri (1530–1600), for instance, looked to the early *ḥasidim (ḥasidim rishonim)* of the second century BCE for examples of those who had attained the state of *devekut* through meditation and solitude:

> We find in the ascetic writings of the ancients that the pious *(ḥasidim)* used to practise ascetic solitude and *devekut,* which means that when they were alone they withdrew their minds from all worldly things and bound their thoughts on the Lord of all. And so my master, Rabbi Isaac the Kabbalist (Isaac Luria), taught that this is seven times more efficacious for the soul than studying. And according to one's strength and ability, one should withdraw from the world and seclude himself one day a week, or once in fifteen days, or once a month, but no less frequently. This is the meaning of the report in the *Mishnah:* "The early *ḥasidim* used to wait (*i.e.* prepare themselves) one hour before praying (and one hour afterwards) in order to concentrate their mind on God" as follows:
>
> > They daily took off nine hours from the study of *Torah* and devoted this time to solitary contemplation and *devekut.* Then they would imagine the light of the *Shekhinah* above their heads as though it were flowing all around them and they were sitting in the midst of the light.... And while in that state of

> meditation, they are all trembling as a natural effect, but rejoicing in trembling.[5]
>
> *Eleazar Azikri, Sefer Ḥaredim, SHEA fol.66a–b, in IKMH p.52, JKLM pp.63–64*

At the end of his book, in a discussion concerning the necessary conditions for attaining the state of *devekut,* Azikri says:

> The fifth condition is the practice of solitary contemplation.... At the appropriate times, one should withdraw to a secluded place where one cannot be seen by others, lift up one's eyes on high to the one King, the Cause of all causes, like a mark for the arrow (of contemplative ascent).... Similarly, as man turns his face to his God, so also will He turn to him, and they will cleave together *(davak)* (in mystical communion). This I have heard from my master and teacher, the holy and pious Rabbi Joseph Sagis, and this was also his practice. Similarly, I have found in the writings of Rabbi Isaac of Akko that this was the practice of some pious men in his time, and you will find the same in the writings of Maimonides, Naḥmanides, Baḥya ibn Pakuda, and Rabbi Jonah of Gerona.
>
> *Eleazar Azikri, Sefer Ḥaredim, SHEA fol.80b, in IKMH pp.52–53, JKLM pp.64–65*

Ḥayyim Vital, foremost disciple of Isaac Luria, also writes that some of the early *ḥasidim* tried "by means of their *devekut*" to emulate the state of constant "communion with their Creator" enjoyed by the "ancient prophets":

> They study ancient books to seek and to find the paths of life, the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do in order to raise their soul to its supernal Root and make it cleave *(davak)* to Him who is eternal perfection, according to the manner of the ancient prophets who were in a state of communion with their Creator throughout their lives.
>
> *Ḥayyim Vital, Shaʿarei Kedushah, Introduction, SKHV, SKHZ p.3; cf. in JKLM pp.65–66*

> By means of their *devekut,* the holy spirit rested on them, teaching them "the way where light dwells",[6] and enlightening their eyes with the mysteries of the *Torah,*... so that they may cleave *(davak)* unto Him; ... for the prophet cleaves *(davak)* to God by drawing down the influx of prophecy and divine blessing on the lower beings.
>
> *Ḥayyim Vital, Shaʿarei Kedushah, Introduction, SKHV, SKHZ p.3; cf. in JKLM p.66*

> (The) ancient *ḥasidim* known as 'ascetics *(perushim)*' … retired into the caves of rocks and into the desert, withdrawing from all social intercourse. Some of them were hermits in their own houses, living (at home) as in a desert, and praising their Creator without interruption, day and night, with the study of *Torah* and the *Psalms of David* … until their mind cleaved *(davak)* with a mighty force and passion to the supernal lights.
>
> *Ḥayyim Vital, Sha'arei Kedushah, Introduction, SKHV, SKHZ p.3; cf. in JKLM pp.65–66*

By these examples, drawn from stories concerning the ancient *ḥasidim,* the kabbalists fortified their belief in the importance of *devekut* as both a process and a goal. For most kabbalists, a life of *devekut* was also linked to asceticism, although some of the mystics of that period rejected the ascetic aspects of devotion. As Isaac Luria's disciple Elijah de Vidas (1518–1592) observes:

> He need not mortify his flesh or torment himself by fasting, for *devekut* depends on nothing but ardent desire for God.
>
> *Elijah de Vidas, Reshit Ḥokhmah 2:4, RHVM fol.63a, in IKMH p.59*

In its fullest sense, *devekut* is related to the meditational state of *hitbodedut* (self-isolation, concentration) described by the kabbalists. *Hitbodedut* implies transcending the limitations of individual self, either by seeking physical solitude coupled with mental and spiritual meditation practice, or by keeping oneself conscious of the presence of God while living with other people and fulfilling one's social duties. In both cases, by transcending the lower self, one experiences the splendour of the higher self, the spiritual Reality, which is always ready to receive the soul of the devotee.

In another place, de Vidas defines *devekut* as

> cleaving with one's soul and having as one's sole aim the unification of the *Shekhinah* and the separation from her of all *kelipot* ('shells', evil demonic powers) and similarly the separation from one's own mind of all alien (sinful, worldly) thought.
>
> *Elijah de Vidas, Reshit Ḥokhmah, RHVW fol.51a, in JKLM p.52*

In other words, the process of *devekut,* which brings the soul into communion with the Divine and eliminates sinful thoughts, also results in the creation of harmony within the divine *Shekhinah* and her separation from negative, demonic forces. Here de Vidas is referring to the teachings of Isaac Luria concerning the way in which creation came into being, and the purpose of the soul's reunion with the Divine.

The state of *devekut* was also related to the practice of the commandments given to Moses. It was believed that their practice would bring one close to God and help overcome negative tendencies:

> As early as Rabbi Ezra of Gerona (*c.*1160–1238), the commandments were described as rooted in the world of *aẓilut* (spiritual realm); thus, they are not merely symbols of divine forces, but are a means of ascent to the upper realms, as well as the way the ten *sefirot* (emanations) are revealed in our world. "All the *miẓvot* (commandments) are God's glory."[7] Performance of the commandments is a mystical act enabling contact with the divine realm and the experience of adherence or cleaving *(devekut).* The *miẓvot* themselves are a sort of drawing light, increasingly "indwelling" until "the soul is separated from the body like a draw-well to the soul."[8] Like a magnet, the commandments draw the soul up to its true and common Root.
>
> *Moshe Hallamish, Introduction to Kabbalah, IKMH p.232*

Some Jewish mystics, such as Moshe Ḥayyim Luzzatto (C18th), see the state of *devekut* as the highest stage on the spiritual path. In writing of the struggle with lower or negative tendencies, he says that the one who is victorious

> will be the 'whole man (*adam ha-shalem,* perfect man)', who will succeed in uniting *(davak)* himself with his Creator, and he will leave the corridor to enter into the (divine) palace, to glow in the light of life. To the extent that he has subdued his evil inclinations and his desires, and withdrawn from those factors which draw him further from the good, and exerted himself to become united with it – to that extent will he attain it and rejoice in it.
>
> *Moshe Ḥayyim Luzzatto, Mesillat Yesharim, MYPJ p.21*

In addition to the *devekut* achieved during one's meditation and prayer, as the kabbalists had emphasized, Hasidism, beginning in the eighteenth century, taught that *devekut* is not in itself a state, but a path of continually increasing spiritual commitment in which the activities of everyday life become saturated with the Divine. From this perspective, not to think constantly of God becomes a state of sin, since it represents a state in which the mind is not filled with the consciousness and love of Him.

Some of these *ḥasidim* describe several levels of *devekut,* leading to a higher state that they call *yiḥud* (union), where individuality is transcended and only the Beloved (God) remains – the individual 'I' becoming naught. According to this way of thinking, *yiḥud* is followed by the state of *aḥdut* (oneness), the deepest level of *devekut,* in which the soul experiences absolute union with

God by merging into Him. In *yiḥud,* the soul might enjoy a feeling of devotion and communion with the Divine, but it falls short of complete union.

Israel ben Eleazar, known as the Baʿal Shem Tov, the first of the eighteenth-century Hasidic masters or *ẓaddikim,* rejected asceticism, and taught a method of ecstatic prayer and inner ascent that resulted in *devekut* while living a normal life in the world.

The Baʿal Shem Tov used the term *devekut* to describe the spiritual state of superconsciousness in which the divine Reality is experienced as a unity that transcends diversity and compartmentalization. The term *devekut* appears in all Hasidic literature as the goal of every spiritual practice. The Baʿal Shem Tov uses a parable to explain the state of *devekut,* of one-pointed devotion to the divine King, setting aside all other things:

> There once was a wise and great king who did everything through illusion – walls and towers and gates; and he commanded the people to come to him through the gates and the towers, and instructed that royal treasures be scattered at each and every gate. And there were some people who came to one gate and took the money and went away while others (went to the next gate, and others to the next, *etc.*) until his loving son made an effort to go directly to his father the king, and then he saw that there was no barrier separating him from his father, for it was all illusion.
>
> *Yaʿakov Yosef of Polnoy, Ben Porat Yosef,*
> *BPYY fol.70c, in MOHE p.75*

In the state of *devekut,* one comes to realize through personal experience that the divine presence is everywhere, saturating the entire creation; that the Divine is not removed from the creation; it is closer than one's own breath. Yaʿakov Yosef explains the parable:

> For all concealment is but an illusion. In truth, everything is of His substance.
>
> *Yaʿakov Yosef of Polnoy, Ben Porat Yosef,*
> *BPYY fol.70c, in MOHE p.75*

Rabbi Dov Baer Schneerson (1773–1827), known in *Ḥabad* Hasidism as the Middle Rebbe, emphasized the importance of achieving spiritual ecstasy in prayer through disciplined practice. He rejected what he called physical ecstasy, which arises from the stirring up of emotions. Although many *ḥasidim* and kabbalists practised meditation, few wrote explicitly on their experiences. Dov Baer, however, has left two dense and challenging works on the subject – *Kuntres ha-Hitpaʿalut* ('Tract on Ecstasy') and *Kuntres ha-Hitbonenut* ('Tract on Contemplation'). In *Kuntres ha-Hitpaʿalut,* he

maintains that *devekut,* as cleaving and attachment to the Divine, is a higher and more intense experience than love:

> There is a difference between love and attachment *(devekut).* Attachment is life itself, since it is the binding of the soul to the Life of Life, the infinite Light, which is called the Source of Life for all souls.
>
> *Rabbi Dov Baer Schneerson, Kuntres ha-Hitpa'alut 1, KHDB, in CMAK p.159*

Devekut is understood as a natural aspect or intrinsic quality of the soul. In this respect, the teachings of Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Lyady, the first of the *Ḥabad* lineage of masters, are discussed by a modern scholar:

> The soul not only indicates its divine origin but also acts as a lighthouse. On the basis of the assumption, expressed in Greek philosophy, that every part seeks to return to the wholeness it originally had, it follows that the soul also strives to ascend and cleave to its source. Hence the religio-mystical nature inherent to the soul. Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Lyady interpreted the verse, "God's candle is man's soul"[9] to mean the soul is like a candle. Just as a candle flame is forever drawn upward toward the element of fire, so the essence and nature of the soul dictates that it return and cleave to its divine source. This notion of the return of the part to the whole, or to its Root, makes adhesion *(devekut)* a natural aspiration, though here the initiative comes from the 'part'. Thus, when the part exhibits true initiative and progress, it is answered by the Whole, as the poet, Rabbi Judah Halevi, said: "When I went out toward You, I found You coming toward me."[10]
>
> *Moshe Hallamish, Introduction to Kabbalah, IKMH p.254*

See also: **aḥdut**, **hitbodedut** (8.5), **yiḥud**.

1. *Deuteronomy* 4:3, *JB.*
2. *Deuteronomy* 29:1.
3. *Deuteronomy* 11:22.
4. *Psalms* 34:8.
5. *Babylonian Talmud, Mishnah Berakhot* 5:1.
6. *Job* 38:19.
7. Rabbi 'Ezra of Gerona, *Likkutei Shikheḥah u-Fe´ah, LSFA* fol. 7b–8a, in *IKMH* p.232.
8. Rabbi 'Ezra of Gerona, *Perush le-Shir ha-Shirim,* in *KRN2* p.528, in *IKMH* p.232.
9. *Proverbs* 20:27.
10. See Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Lyady, *Tanya* 19; Moshe Hallamish, *Nativ la-Tanya, NTMH* pp.116–17.

dhammaṭṭhiti-ñāṇa (Pa) *Lit.* knowledge *(ñāṇa)* concerning the nature *(ṭhiti)* of phenomena *(dhamma);* insight into or understanding of the causal relationship between phenomena and the way things happen; awareness of the changing and interdependent state of things; awareness that all things are in a state of impermanence, are subject to suffering, have no definitive self or identity, and are related to each other in a chain of dependent origination *(paṭicca-samuppāda)* – the Buddhist principle which observes that all things are dependent on what comes before and influence what follows.

More specifically, a chapter on the term in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* explains that *dhammaṭṭhiti-ñāṇa* is understanding of the causal relationship between each of the links in the chain of dependent origination, which begins with spiritual ignorance *(avijjā)* and ends with old age and death.[1]

First found in the Pali *suttas,* the term appears in discourses concerning the interdependence of things and their relationship to each other. In the *Susīma Sutta* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya,* for instance, the Buddha explains to Susīma that liberation can be attained by understanding of this principle, and does not require the acquisition of supernatural powers, as Susīma had believed. The Buddha begins his explanation with the observation:

> First comes understanding of the nature of phenomena *(dhammaṭṭhiti-ñāṇa),* afterwards understanding of *nibbāna.*
>
> *Saṃyutta Nikāya 12:70, Susīma Sutta, PTSS2 p.124*

Elsewhere, it is said that even that insight is itself evanescent:

> Understanding of the nature of phenomena *(dhammaṭṭhiti-ñāṇa)* is also subject to destruction, vanishing, fading away, and cessation.
>
> *Saṃyutta Nikāya 12:34, Dutiyañāṇavatthu Sutta, PTSS2 p.60, CDBB p.573*

The synonymous term *dhammaṭṭhitatā* appears in the *Paccaya Sutta* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya,* where it is part of the introduction to a discourse on dependent origination:

> Whether or not *tathāgatas* appear, this characteristic still persists: the nature of phenomena *(dhammaṭṭhitatā),* the established behaviour of phenomena *(dhammaniyāmatā)* – this specific conditionality. A *tathāgata* awakens to that and breaks through to that. Having done so, he explains it, teaches it, proclaims it, establishes it, discloses it, analyses it, elucidates it. He says: "Look! With birth as a condition, *bhikkhus,* aging and death automatically arise."
>
> *Saṃyutta Nikāya 12:20, Paccaya Sutta, PTSS2 p.25; cf. CDBB p.551, SNTB*

See also: **jñāna**.

1. *Paṭisambhidāmagga* 1:4, *PTSP1* pp.50–52; see also Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 7:20, 22, 19:26, 21:135, *PTSV* pp.200, 604, 671.

dharmamegha samādhi, **dharmamegha bhūmi** (S) *Lit.* rain cloud *(megha)* of spiritual Truth *(Dharma)* absorption *(samādhi);* stage *(bhūmi)* of the rain cloud *(dharmamegha)* of *Dharma;* an inwardly absorbed state of consciousness in which *Dharma* descends upon the practitioner like rain from a cloud; absorption in the rain-cloud of *Dharma;* a deep meditative state of *samādhi* or superconsciousness. In this instance, *Dharma,* a term with a wide range of meaning and always difficult to translate, represents the highest degree of spirituality, which is the primal Law, Principle, or Truth in creation.

According to the *yoga* system of Patañjali, *dharmamegha* is the name of the highest *samādhi,* in which the yogi, through prolonged and intensive meditation, attains the most sublime degree of mystic consciousness, which is portrayed poetically as descending upon him like rain from a cloud. *Dharmamegha samādhi* is the final *samādhi,* in which the yogi frees himself completely from all lower constraints:

> Having no selfish desire,
> even in the most exalted state of illumination,
> and from exercising constant discriminative understanding,
> arises *dharmamegha samādhi.*
> Thence follows the cessation of afflictions *(kleshas)* and *karma.*
>
> As a consequence, being free of all coverings and impurities,
> the universe appears small in comparison to the Infinite.
> Then, the *guṇas* (attributes of creation) having fulfilled their purpose,
> the process of change comes to an end.
>
> *Patañjali, Yoga Sūtras 4:29–32*

In *Mahāyāna Buddhism, dharmamegha bhūmi* is understood as the tenth and final level or stage *(bhūmi)* in the attainment of *bodhisattva*-hood. In this state, the soul is said to attain the purity and brilliance resembling that of a *buddha* (an awakened one), at the same time experiencing divine Music within all things:

> At the stage called *dharmamegha,* a *bodhisattva* finds himself seated on a throne in the lotus palace, . . . a crown decorated and ornamented with all kinds of precious stones on his head, his body shining brilliantly like the moon in the yellowish gold colour of the *champaka* flower. The *buddhas* now come . . . and, with their lotus-like hands, sprinkle the forehead of the *bodhisattva* who is seated on the throne

> in the lotus palace; the *buddhas* thus give him a baptism personally by hand. . . .
>
> Where the *tathāgatas* (thus come ones, *buddhas*) enter with their sustaining power there will be music not only in various musical instruments, but also in grass, shrubs, trees and mountains, . . . as also in towns, palaces, houses, and royal abodes. How much more music will there be in those endowed with consciousness!
>
> *Lankāvatāra Sūtra 101–2; cf. LSMT pp.88–89*

The condition of consciousness is essentially the same as that described by Patañjali. In Jainism, the stage of *dharmamegha* has been described by the eighth-century Jain commentator Āchārya Haribhadra as equivalent to the fourteenth and final *guṇasthāna* (stage of spiritual development), known as *ayogi-kevali* (omniscience without activity), where all activity ceases, and the soul attains final liberation. Demonstrating the underlying unity between different schools, Haribhadra equates the same stage with the final stages of other systems, such as the *amṛitātman* (bliss-soul) of one, the *bhāvashatru* (existence conqueror) of another, the *parā* (highest) of another, and so on.[1]

See also: **samādhi**.

1. Haribhadra, *Yogaviṃshikā* 2, in *JVLK* p.120, in *JPPR.*

dhawq (A), **źawq** (P) *Lit.* tasting; in Sufism, the first beginnings of direct mystical experience, perception, knowledge, or inner wisdom; the first stage of mystic revelation, followed first by *shurb* (drinking), and then by *rayy* or *rī* (quenching). In the terminology of Ibn al-ʿArabī, *dhawq* is more or less synonymous with *fatḥ* or *futūḥ* (opening) and *kashf* (unveiling). Sometimes, he speaks of an additional stage, *sukr* (intoxication).[1] Other similar terms used by him include *baṣīrah* (insight) and *shuhūd* or *mushāhadah* (witnessing, contemplative vision). He explains:

> *Dhawq* implies tasting – the first rudiments of divine manifestation to individual consciousness *(tajalliyāt).* While *shurb* (drinking) implies the intermediate stages of these manifestations.
>
> *Ibn al-ʿArabī, Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Ṣūfīyah, ISMA p.60, WSNE p.95*

Sufis often say that *dhawq* (tasting) leads to a state of semi-intoxication; *shurb* (drinking) leads to intoxication and, paradoxically, to a state of clear, awakened sobriety *(ṣaḥw).* Sanāʾī says simply:

The heart that lacks the fire of yearning *(shawq)*
knows not the sweetness of tasting *(źawq).*
Sanā'ī, Maśnavī, MSMR p.104, in FNI2 p.269; cf. in SSE2 p.99

See also: **chashish**, **shurb**.

1. See W.C. Chittick, *Sufi Path of Knowledge, SPK* pp.392–93 (n.36).

dhīr(a) (S/H), **dhīraj** (Pu) *Lit.* steady, calm and resolute, stable, steadfast, enduring, patient, firm, determined, cool, sober; hence, brave, bold, courageous; also, steadfastness, patience, endurance, composure; in the *Ādi Granth,* the state of the soul that hears the inner Music and is in contact with the Divine:

Patience *(dhīraj),* glory and honour come to those
who listen to the Name *(Nām)* of the Lord.
Guru Arjun, Ādi Granth 257, AGK

You are the Creator, the Cause of causes:
I cannot think of any other.
Whatever You do, comes to pass.
I sleep in peace and poise *(sahj sukh).*
My mind has become patient *(dhīraj),*
since I fell at God's door.
Guru Arjun, Ādi Granth 410, AGK

dìng (C) *Lit.* to set, to fix, to determine; to stabilize, to steady, to still, to concentrate; stillness, concentration.

For the realization of human wholeness or perfection, the various Daoist schools consider both mundane and transcendental development to be of importance. Although each school may have a different emphasis, the desirability of a healthy body, a tranquil mind, and a pure spirit is generally accepted.

The Daoist seeks to still and stabilize body, mind, and spirit. Stabilizing the physical body – by maintaining good health and performing right actions – provides a firm foundation for stabilizing the mind. The less the mind is influenced by the world, the closer it becomes to the *Dào.* Master Yáng Dàoshēng considers the benefits of a still mind:

To eliminate *karma* (*yuán,* causes) is to sever entanglements with worldly things. By accepting things, the body is not stressed. In

> non-doing (*wúwéi,* unforced, selfless, and desireless action), the mind automatically finds peace. The more peaceful and simple you become day by day, the less burdened you are by worldly things day by day. The further away your attitudes are from worldly things, the closer your mind is to the *Dào.*
>
> Then the mind no longer wanders. It is absorbed in the *Dào* and merged with the *Dào.* It finds peace within the *Dào.* This is called 'returning to the Root'. Being with the Root and never separating from it is called stillness *(jìngdìng).* After remaining still *(jìngdìng)* for a long time, ailments disappear and (spiritual) life returns – and continues to return and accumulate. Then you will automatically attain realization and constancy – realization that is obscured by nothing, and constancy that is changed by nothing. In fact, the eternity that transcends life and death arises from these.
>
> *Yáng Dàoshēng, Zhēnquán, JY244, ZW373*

Master Lǐ Dàochún (C13th) says that bodily stillness leads to mental and spiritual stillness, which results in rediscovery of the wholeness of the spirit. In this context, *xíng* seems to refer in a general way to the physical embodiment of mind and spirit – to one's existence as a spiritual being dwelling in a body:

> When the body *(shēn)* is still *(dìng),* then one's bodily existence *(xíng)* is still *(dìng).* When one's bodily existence is still *(dìng),* then (spiritual) life *(mìng)* is whole *(quán).* When the mind *(xīn)* is still *(dìng),* then spirit *(shén)* is whole. When spirit is whole, then your (original) nature *(xìng)* is whole. When body *(shēn)* and mind *(xīn)* are in harmony, then your (original) nature and (true spiritual) life are whole, and one's bodily existence *(xíng)* and spirit become subtle. This is called attainment of the elixir *(dān).*
>
> *Lǐ Dàochún, Zhōnghé jí, DZ249, JY226*

He goes on to say that although the refinement and transformation of *jīng* (vital essence) into *qì* (life energy), and *qì* into *shén* (spirit) is a great achievement, it is not the end of the journey. The spirit has to be further refined, which is an even greater accomplishment. Lǐ Dàochún is describing the standard process of gradual refinement and transformation, according to the teachings of the *jīndān* (gold elixir) or *nèidān* (inner elixir, inner alchemy) tradition:

> Transforming vital essence *(jīng)* into energy *(qì),* and energy *(qì)* into spirit *(shén)* is not so exceptional. Why? Because there is still the subtlety of refining spirit *(shén),* which cannot be taken lightly. . . .
>
> The general idea of *jīndān* is that if you direct your attention single-mindedly *(zhǐyǎn)* to this point (the inner centre), then you will

know for sure that this great work is not in the written word. To know whether this is so, you must know where to begin. Once you know where to begin, just go ahead and do it, starting with refinement of the vital essence *(jīng).* Once the vital essence is steady *(zhù),* then refine the life energy *(qì).* Once the life energy is still *(dìng),* then refine the spirit *(shén).* Once spirit is at peace *(níng),* then return to emptiness *(xū).* (Refine emptiness) until the emptiness is absolute, then attainment of *Dào* is complete.

Lǐ Dàochún, Zhōnghé jí, DZ249, JY226

When the body and mind are stilled, then the spirit can attain its full potential – realization of the *Dào,* the "radiance" of which never dims:

With stillness *(dìng)* of body and mind attained,
energy *(qì)* and essence *(jīng)* are strengthened,
and spirit is manifested.
With release from the body,
I transcend the physical and downward scattering.
With mind silent,
I realize nonexistence.

Sun and moon may come and go,
heaven and earth may alternate.
So unobstructed is the vastness
that the great radiance just goes on shining.

Lǐ Dàochún, Zhōnghé jí, DZ249, JY226

dispersion, **dissipation** In spiritual life, the spreading of one's attention and energies into the body and, through the senses, into the material world; the scattering of thoughts into worldly things. The biblical prophet Jeremiah pinpoints the essence of the matter. The soul has forgotten the divine Source of its being, and permitted its attention and energies to be scattered without:

My people have committed a double crime:
they have abandoned Me,
the Fountain of Living Water,
only to dig cisterns for themselves,
leaky cisterns that hold no water.

Jeremiah 2:13, JB

Many Christian writers have said the same:

> The essence of the soul is simple, but if the soul is dissipated in manifold things, she cannot utilize her essence. . . . The more the senses are turned outwardly, the more scattered they become in their operations. And the more dissipated these interests are, the more the inner man is hindered from receiving the divine simple Truth – God. It is impossible for God to be united in the fluctuating, outward sensual man. It is impossible for God to be received in what is disunited. He can only fully enter into unity.
>
> *Book of the Poor in Spirit 2:1.4, 4:6.3, BPSG pp.127, 257–58*

> When the mind *(nous)* is no longer dissipated among external things or dispersed across the world through the senses, it returns to itself; and by means of itself it ascends to the thought of God.
>
> *Basil the Great, Letter 2, PG32 col. 228a; cf. in LDAC p.51*

> The soul is drained by what it enjoys, and many different pleasures dissipate it; they get in the way of its ability to concentrate all its attention on finding its delight in God.
>
> *François de Sales, Love of God 5:7, LGFS pp.197–98*

The dispersion of mind and soul into the body and the world, and the consequent identification with them, is the universal human condition, which all spiritual and religious traditions have attempted to address and understand within the framework of their own doctrines. Porphyry, a third-century Neoplatonist and disciple of Plotinus, paraphrasing and simplifying his master's words,[1] writes of the soul's purification from the body and all material things:

> To begin with, the foundation of purification is to know oneself, to realize that one is a soul bound to a foreign being (*i.e.* the body) of a different nature. Further, when a person is convinced of this truth, he should gather himself together within himself, detaching himself from the body and freeing himself entirely from the passions. He who makes use of his senses too often, though it be done without attachment or pleasure, is nevertheless distracted by bodily concerns, and is chained thereto by sensation. The pains and the pleasures produced by sense objects exercise a great influence upon the soul, and inspire the soul with a bodily inclination. It is important to remove such a disposition from the soul.
>
> *Porphyry, Launching-Points; cf. PLRM pp.31–32*

See also: **distraction**, **recollection** (8.5).

1. Plotinus, *Enneads* 1:2.1–7.

distraction In spiritual life, the state of being mentally scattered or unfocused; the distraction of worries, enticing thoughts, desires, *etc.;* being absorbed with the Many rather than concentrated upon the One; the converse of the spiritual or inner concentration experienced in undistracted prayer or meditation.

Probably all schools of meditation and contemplation have recognized the need to quell the teeming multitude of distracting thoughts that crowd in upon the mind. This is a matter of practicality, not of doctrine. The purpose of meditation by whatever name and flavour is to bring all the distraction to a halt, for it is the mind alone that stands between the soul and realization of the Divine. In Plato's *Phaedo,* Socratēs says just that:

> SOCRATĒS: When does the soul attain the truth? For whenever it attempts to examine *(skopein)* anything in the company of the body, it is clearly deceived by it (the body).
>
> SIMMIAS: Quite so.
>
> SOCRATĒS: Then is it not in the course of meditation (*logizesthai, i.e.* withdrawal from the body), if at all, that the soul can get a clear view of Reality?
>
> SIMMIAS: Yes.
>
> SOCRATĒS: And surely the soul can meditate *(logizethai)* best when it is free of all distractions, such as sounds or sights or pain or pleasure of any kind – that is, when she takes leave of the body, and has as little as possible to do with it; when she has no bodily sense or desire, but aspires only for Reality.
>
> *Plato, Phaedo 65b–c; cf. DP1 pp.415–16, LDST p.118*

Christian mystics have made the same observation. St Bernard gives a long and heartfelt description of the state of his wandering mind:

> Nothing is more fleeting in me than my heart; how often it abandons me to run after evil thoughts and how many times it offends God. Vain, restless, fickle, my heart runs away as it pleases, deaf to divine counsel. It cannot be contained within itself and changes more often than the most changeable thing. Distracted by an infinity of things, it roams here and there through countless experiences in endless search of rest. When my heart is totally miserable from all this effort, it reappears, drained of all repose, feeling no peace within but all out of sorts with itself, and then, fleeing once more in a confusion of wills, it changes advice, builds new things, destroys the old, rebuilds what it just tore down, reorders and rearranges things, again and again, because it no longer desires what it thought it desired, and so it never can stay in one place.
>
> Like a mill turning round and round so quickly that nothing is cast out and everything put in is ground up and consumed, my heart

moves constantly, not a moment of rest; asleep or awake, it dreams or thinks of whatever is happening to it. As sand breaks the mill, so bitter thoughts wreck my heart; the pitch that dirties that mechanism is the impure thoughts dirtying mine; and the chaff obstructing the mill is the vain thoughts that disquiet and fatigue my heart.

So long as my heart is not concerned about future joy and does not seek divine favour, it leaves celestial love and busies itself with love of earthly things. Fleeing from heavenly to earthly considerations, my heart is open to vanity, curiosity carries it off, desire seduces it, delight deceives it, luxury sullies it, envy torments, ire disturbs, and sadness wearies it, so that finally it is cast to all the vices, miserably unhappy, and all because it chose to abandon the one God who could satisfy it. It scatters itself throughout a multitude of things, here and there, seeking a resting place but content with none until it turns back to itself.

Drifting from thought to thought, diverted by scores of desires and things to do, it would seem that the quantity if not the quality of distractions would satisfy it. And so the heart, shorn of divine grace, goes slipping away until it comes to its senses and considers what it had thought about, and, finding nothing, realizes that a lot of troublesome thinking produced absolutely nothing of substance. . . . My heart plans more things in a single moment than everyone together in the world could do in a year. I am not united with God, and therefore am divided within myself.

St Bernard, in TSAO pp.246–47

Others have written similarly:

When we let our hearts run after earthly things without restraint, a multitude of vain thoughts arises, so that our mind becomes so divided that even the order of our native discrimination is disturbed. For, since the worldly things that we desire so unrestrainedly are infinite, the thoughts that we conceive when we remember them cannot be finite. As from moment to moment they arise, one after another, in so many different ways, even we ourselves cannot give any account of whence or how they enter or leave the mind. If, then, we want to have ordered, steady, peaceful thoughts, let us make it our business to restrain our hearts from this immoderate distraction.

Hugh of St Victor, Noah's Ark 4:4, HVSW pp.125–26

People are often preoccupied, harbouring useless thoughts in their minds, practically unaware of what they are thinking about. Strangely enough, they are but inadvertently intent upon their thoughts; they would rather be without them – witness that man who said: "My

mind is distracted with whirling thoughts."[1] … Few people devote themselves to meditating, to exciting a love for God in their hearts.

François de Sales, Love of God 6:2, LGFS pp.221–22

Willingly would I love Him,
knew I but how to begin;
But He is hidden from me.
Alas, I confess that it is I who am at fault,
for my heart is restless and distracted ('many-folded'),
and I live in the midst of petty cares.

Jan van Ruysbroek, Book of the Twelve Beguines 1, BTB pp.49–50

The moment we go out of ourselves via harmful distractions, we are separated from God, for He is not a lover of discord, but of peace, love, and harmony.… The door and road of perdition are entitled distraction and dispersion, and go in the opposite direction from recollection.… If you analyse evil, you will discover that it begins when the heart is distracted and scattered, and all who eventually are damned enter through this wide door to travel the spacious road where it is legal for the heart to roam the whole world on fantasy and distraction.… As the Lord says, many enter through the door of distraction but few manage the narrow one,[2] and although it may happen that many seek the road of recollection, few find it. Perseverance lights it up, however, and the Lord takes the hand of those who wish to open the door into themselves to find the life of grace, which is seated on the throne of the heart.

Francisco de Osuna, Third Spiritual Alphabet 9:1–2, TSAO pp.242, 244

The strait or narrow gate leads to the inner path, travelled by contemplation or interior prayer. It is only this that can quieten the distracted mind:

Undistracted prayer is a sign of love for God; but careless or distracted prayer is a sign of love for pleasure.

Mark the Ascetic, Made Righteous by Works 97, Philokalia, PCT1 p.133

The mind *(nous)* cannot devote itself to inner *(noēta)* realities unless you sunder its attachment to the senses and to sensible things. The senses have a natural attachment to sensible things and, when distracted by them, they distract the mind *(nous).*

Thalassios the Libyan, On Love 2:41–42, Philokalia; cf. PCT2 p.315

If your mind *(nous)* is still distracted during prayer, you do not yet know what it is to pray as a monk; but your prayer is still worldly, embellishing the outer tabernacle.

> When you pray, keep close watch on your memory, so that it does not distract you with recollections of your past. But make yourself aware that you are standing before God. For by nature the mind *(nous)* is apt to be carried away by memories during prayer.
>
> *Evagrios Pontikos, On Prayer 44–45, Philokalia; cf. PCT1 p.61*

Many of those who have attempted to still the mind's distractions have longed for a quieter or less busy location. Even those who have enjoyed many spiritual experiences may not be unaffected by the busy-ness of their outer life, even if their activities are undertaken for religious or other good causes. In reality, however, the mind is as easily distracted in solitude as in normal life, though a balance between the two is a practical solution:

> On the vigil of St Lawrence, just after receiving communion, my mental faculties were so scattered and distracted I couldn't help myself, and I began to envy those who live in deserts and to think that since they don't hear or see anything they are free of this wandering of the mind. I heard: "You are greatly mistaken, daughter; rather, the temptations of the devil there are stronger; be patient, for as long as you live, a wandering mind cannot be avoided."
>
> *Teresa of Ávila, Testimonies 39:1, CWT1 p.409*

> That a man who is beset with care should be quiet and in a state of peace, is impossible. For the necessary things which are partners to those things upon which he expends his labour cannot but have the effect that he be shaken; and they will deny him rest and quiet. For the only opportunity for Satan to enter the soul is distraction.... A distracted heart cannot help but err; and wisdom will not open its gate before it....
>
> The care of practical things confuses the soul, and the distraction of work disturbs the mind and makes it lose its quietness, driving it away from its peacefulness. It is becoming for the solitary who has devoted himself to heavenly work that his mind be constantly free from care so that, when he examines his soul and meditates, he may not see in it any thing belonging to this world, nor desire of any visible object; but that, on account of his complete absorption from temporary things, he may be able to meditate upon the law of the Lord night and day, without any distraction.
>
> *Isaac of Nineveh, Treatises 16, 5–6; cf. MTIN pp.89, 42, 55–56*

When it comes to combatting the wandering tendencies of the mind, all are agreed that the only recourse is to take refuge in God through interior prayer:

> Rather than combatting distractions or temptations directly, which would only serve to augment them and to draw the soul away from God, which should ever be its sole occupation, we should simply turn away from them, and draw nearer to God. A little child, seeing a fierce animal, does not stay to fight it, nor even to look at it, but quickly runs for shelter to its mother's arms, where it will be safe.... If we adopt any other course of action, if in our weakness we attempt to attack our enemies, we will be wounded, even if we are not entirely defeated; but remaining in the simple presence of God, we will find ourselves immediately fortified.
>
> *Madame Guyon, Method of Prayer 19:1–2; cf. MPST p.45, SPID p.269*

> When, through weakness, we become as it were uncentred, we must immediately turn again inward; and this process we must repeat as often as our distractions recur. It is a matter of little account to be devout and recollected for an hour or half hour, if the unction and spirit of prayer do not continue with us during the whole day.
>
> *Madame Guyon, Method of Prayer 14:3, SPID p.262*

In the Orthodox tradition, the established method of turning to God is through repetition of the Jesus prayer, perhaps with the attention focused in the heart:

> When your mind *(nous)* is firmly established in your heart, it must not remain there silent and idle; it should constantly repeat and meditate on the prayer, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me," and should never stop doing this. For this prayer protects the mind *(nous)* from distraction, renders it impregnable to diabolic attacks, and every day increases its love and desire for God.
>
> *Nikēphoros, On Watchfulness, Philokalia; cf. PCT4 p.206*

Once the habit of inward concentration is firmly established, the mind is less easily distracted:

> Those who are well established cannot be distracted from prayer or meditation by noise or tumult or any other thing.
>
> *Richard Rolle, Fire of Love 33; cf. FLML p.140, FLRR p.147*

See also: **attention**, **concentration** (8.5), **recollection** (8.5), **watchfulness**.

1. *Cf. Job* 17:11.
2. *Matthew* 7:13–14; *Luke* 13:24.

divine darkness, **divine night**, **luminous darkness** The superluminous darkness (Gk. *hyperphōtos gnophos*) of unknowing within which God dwells; paradoxical terms contained in the mystical philosophy of the unknown Syrian monk (*c.*500) who wrote a number of treatises he pseudo-epigraphically attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite, a character who makes a one-verse appearance in the *Acts of the Apostles;*[1] the radiant divine darkness discovered within one's own being when in deep contemplation, which the soul must penetrate to gain a greater understanding of the Divine. Dionysius writes that this divine darkness is encountered when the attention is withdrawn from the self and all external things:

> In the earnest exercise of mystic contemplation *(mystika theamata),* leave behind the senses and the activities of the intellect, and all things that the senses or the intellect can perceive, and all being and nonbeing. And strive upwards in unknowing, insofar as you are able, towards union with Him who is above all things and all knowledge. For, by unceasing and absolute withdrawal from yourself and all things, abandoning all restraint in pure and absolute ecstasy *(ekstasis),* and being set free from all, you will be borne upwards to the radiance of the divine darkness *(theiou skotous aktis)* that lies beyond all existence.
>
> *Pseudo-Dionysius, Mystical Theology 1; cf. in CU p.25, DNMT pp.191–92,JTPM p.239, OCM p.175, WDA1 p.130*

According to his teaching, it is not a darkness such as is understood in this world, but an unfathomable "superluminous darkness . . . outshining all brilliance", within which dwells "He who has made darkness His secret place".[2] In an opening invocation, he prays:

> Guide us to the uttermost height of mystic understanding, which lies beyond light and further far than knowledge, where the simple, absolute and unchangeable mystery of divine Truth lies hidden in the superluminous darkness *(hyperphōtos gnophos)* of the secret Silence, outshining all brilliance with the intensity of its darkness, and surcharging our blind minds with the utterly impalpable and invisible fairness of glories of surpassing beauty!
>
> *Pseudo-Dionysius, Mystical Theology 1; cf. DNMT p.191, WDA1 p.130*

In simple terms, it is the "inaccessible light" of God:

> The divine darkness *(theios gnophos)* is the inaccessible light in which God is said to dwell. And in this darkness *(gnophos),* invisible because of its surpassing radiance and unapproachable because of the excess

> of the streams of supernal light, everyone must enter who is deemed worthy to see or know God.
>
> *Pseudo-Dionysius, Letter to Dorothy the Deacon; cf. in JTPM p.239, WDA1 p.144*

The divine Essence, dwelling in this bright darkness, lies beyond all speech, understanding, the duality of good and evil, and all mystical experiences of sound and light:

> The Good Cause of all things is eloquent yet speaks few words, or rather none; possessing neither speech nor understanding because It exceeds all things in a superessential manner, and is revealed in Its naked truth only to those who transcend the contrariness of fair and foul, and pass beyond the uttermost heights of the holy ascent, and leave behind them all divine illuminations and voices and heavenly utterances, and plunge into the darkness *(gnophos)* where truly dwells … that One who is beyond all things.
>
> *Pseudo-Dionysius, Mystical Theology 1; cf. DNMT p.193, WDA1 pp.131–32*

Dionysius elucidates his meaning by reference to the *Exodus* account of the Israelites' escape from Egypt and Moses' receipt of the Ten Commandments.[3] Here, God first appears as a "pillar of cloud" to guide them. Later, the "glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud,"[4] and God said to Moses, "Lo, I come unto you in a dark cloud."[5] Moses also experiences light and sound emanating from the cloud.[6] Subsequently, he is enveloped in the dark cloud and remains there "forty days and forty nights".[7] Interpreting the story allegorically, Dionysius explains:

> (Moses is) bidden first to undergo purification himself, and then to separate himself from those who have not undergone it. And after all the purification, he hears the many-voiced trumpets and sees many lights flash forth with pure and streaming rays. Then he stands apart from the multitude, and with the chosen priests presses forward to the uttermost pinnacle of the divine ascent. Nevertheless, he meets not with God Himself, for he beholds – not Him indeed, for He is invisible – but the place in which He dwells.
>
> *Pseudo-Dionysius, Mystical Theology 1; cf. DNMT p.193, WDA1 p.132*

Having gone beyond the inner lights and sounds, Moses

> enters into the darkness *(gnophos)* of unknowing *(agnōsia),* a truly secret darkness *(mystikos gnophos),* in which he abandons all the

> apprehensions of his understanding, and is rapt in that which is wholly intangible and invisible. And now, belonging wholly to That which is beyond all things and to none else – neither to himself or another – and being, through the passive stillness of all his reasoning powers, united in his highest part to Him that is wholly unknowable, he knows by not knowing in a manner that transcends understanding.
>
> *Pseudo-Dionysius, Mystical Theology 1;*
> *cf. DNMT p.194, in OCM p.173, WDA1 p.132*

Again, so as to be stripped of all mental faculties, he prays:

> Unto this darkness *(gnophos)* that is beyond light, we pray that we may come, and may attain vision through the loss of sight and knowledge. And that in ceasing thus to see or to know, we may learn to know that which is beyond all perception and understanding – for this emptying of our faculties is true sight and knowledge.
>
> *Pseudo-Dionysius, Mystical Theology 2; cf. DNMT p.194, WDA1 p.133*

For, he says, it is all that is seen and known that stands between the soul and the divine darkness:

> Ascending upwards, . . . we strip off all qualities in order that we may attain a naked knowledge of that unknowing *(agnōsia)* that is shrouded by all that is known, and that we may begin to see that superessential darkness *(hyperousios gnophos)* that is hidden by all the light that is in existent things.
>
> *Pseudo-Dionysius, Mystical Theology 2; cf. DNMT pp.195–96, WDA1 p.133*

In that darkness beyond the intellect, there is neither speech nor thought:

> Plunging into the darkness *(gnophos)* which is above the intellect *(nous),* we shall find ourselves reduced, not merely to brevity of speech, but even to the absolute absence of both speech and thought.
>
> *Pseudo-Dionysius, Mystical Theology 3; cf. DNMT p.198, WDA1 p.135*

Dionysius was not the first among the Christians to speak of the divine and luminous darkness. The expression is first encountered in the writings of Gregory of Nazianzus (*c.*325–389) and Gregory of Nyssa (*d.c.*385). Like Dionysius, Gregory of Nyssa speaks of progress through light to a divine darkness that grows progressively deeper. He, too, refers to the story of Moses in *Exodus,* identifying three stages in Moses' spiritual ascent – "light *(phōs)*", "cloud *(nephelē)*", and "darkness *(gnophos)*":

> Moses' vision of God began with light *(phōs);* afterwards God spoke to him in a cloud *(nephelē).* But when Moses rose higher and became more perfect, he saw God in the darkness *(gnophos).*
>
> Now the doctrine we are taught here is as follows: our initial withdrawal from wrong and erroneous ideas of God is a transition from darkness to light.
>
> Next comes a closer awareness of hidden things, and by this the soul is guided through (spiritual) sense phenomena to the world of the invisible. And this awareness is a kind of cloud, which overshadows all appearances, and slowly guides and accustoms the soul to look towards what is hidden.
>
> Next the soul makes progress through all these stages and goes on higher, and as she leaves below all that human nature can attain, she enters within the secret chamber of the divine knowledge, and here she is cut off on all sides by the divine darkness. Now she leaves outside all that can be grasped by sense or by reason, and the only thing left for her contemplation is the Invisible and the Incomprehensible. And here God is, as the scriptures tell us in connection with Moses: "But Moses went to the dark cloud wherein God was."[8]
>
> *Gregory of Nyssa, On Canticles 2, PG44 cols.1000c ff., GGG p.247*

So first, the darkness of error is removed by the light of better understanding. Here, 'darkness' and 'light' are being used metaphorically. Then, the soul leaves behind everything of this world, together with the normal faculties of human understanding, gaining in deeper concentration and spiritual awareness until it is enveloped, as it were, in a spiritual cloud or atmosphere through which all things are viewed. But finally, the soul reaches the Invisible and Incomprehensible, which – being invisible – can be understood as darkness – the darkness within which God dwells. In his allegorical *Life of Moses,* Gregory repeats much the same description, reiterating that God is in darkness because He is beyond vision and knowledge. He says, "This realm the scriptures call a 'dark cloud'. And by this is meant the invisibility and incomprehensibility of God."[9] And:

> (The soul) keeps on going deeper until, by the operation of the spirit, it penetrates the Invisible and the Incomprehensible, and it is there that it sees God. The true vision and the true knowledge of what we seek consists precisely in not seeing, in an awareness that our Goal transcends all knowledge, and is everywhere cut off from us by the darkness of incomprehensibility.
>
> *Gregory of Nyssa, Life of Moses, PG44 cols.376c ff., VMTP 2:162ff., GGG p.118*

And again, where Gregory interprets the "Spouse" or Beloved of the biblical *Song of Songs* as both God and the divine Word:

> (The soul) is encompassed by a divine night, during which her Spouse approaches, but does not reveal Himself. But how can that which is invisible reveal Itself in the night? By the fact He gives the soul some sense of his presence, even while He eludes her clear apprehension, concealed as He is by the invisibility of His nature.
>
> *Gregory of Nyssa, On Canticles 2, PG44 cols.1000c ff., GGG p.248*

Gregory's interest, here, is allegorical interpretation of the Bible, and it is difficult to know how much he is speaking from personal experience and how much from a conceptual understanding. Indeed, it is similarly difficult to know how much of the descriptions of Dionysius are based on experience, how much on speculative imagination, and how much on an inherited tradition. The common factor, however, in both their descriptions is that God is enveloped in darkness because He is invisible. But for neither of them does this mean that the soul is forever cut off from God. In fact, the soul feels God's presence in the darkness, and it is there that it finds union with Him. Putting it another way, Gregory also describes the soul as contemplating the dark unknowability of God in the mirror of itself.[10]

To Gregory's understanding, there are three ways in which the soul experiences God in the darkness: through the mirror of itself, through the activation of its spiritual senses, and through the indwelling Word. And these experiences, he frequently reiterates, are full of fragrance and sweetness.[11] Nor is it the case that Gregory is unaware of divine light. In fact, after speaking of the divine darkness, he goes on to call it "this luminous darkness",[12] thereby helping to remove any sense of paradox or contradiction from his thesis:

> We too … shall become luminous if we rise above this earthly darkness and draw near to "the true Light" which is Christ, and if "the true light" that "shines in darkness" descends upon us. Then shall we become light, as the Lord promised His disciples, unless, of course, the dirt of sin should be smeared over our souls and thus mar the beauty of the light.
>
> *Gregory of Nyssa, On Virginity, PG44 cols.364a ff.; cf. GGG p.110*

The treatises of Dionysius, translated into many different languages, had a far-reaching influence on the language of medieval Christian mysticism, and echoes of his terminology and manner of expression abound. Indeed, more than a few books were published entitled *Mystical Theology.* Clearly echoing Dionysius, Jerónimo Nadal speaks of a "holy unknowing" in prayer, "full of light, full of sweetness and knowledge", in which, "the more one mortifies

the understanding,… the greater are the light and the knowledge he will find". And likewise:

> The fruits of contemplation are very sweet, coming as they do from a kind of unknowing of all things and from a darkness from which streams the brightest of lights. For what knowledge is higher than that wherein neither sense nor understanding can explain anything and the soul is raised above itself and above all that comes within its natural reach by the gift of divine enlightenment?
>
> *Jerónimo Nadal, Apologia Exercitiorum, JNOD p.248, in SSM3 p.190*

Even the writer of the well-known Middle English work, the *Cloud of Unknowing,* specifically acknowledges his debt, identifying his "cloud of unknowing" with "Dionysius' mystical theology, his … shining darkness, and his unknowing knowing".[13] The identification, however, does not seem to be entirely accurate. While the cloud of unknowing is a barrier of inner darkness to be pierced or broken down on the soul's ascent to God, in Dionysius' symbolism, God Himself is the "divine darkness" and "luminous darkness".

The later fathers of the Orthodox Church also make frequent reference to the "mystical theology" and "divine darkness" of Dionysius. The eleventh-century monk of Constantinople, Nikētas Stēthatos, describes how spiritual practice

> raises the aspirant to the contemplation of the spiritual essences of the created world, and then inducts him into the divine darkness of theology,… where in the life of blessedness he ceases from all outward labours and reposes in God. For he has become a terrestrial angel and a celestial man; he has glorified God in himself, and God will glorify him.
>
> *Nikētas Stēthatos, On the Practice of the Virtues 1, On the Inner Nature of Things 51, Philokalia, PCT4 pp.79, 121*

And likewise:

> A soul that disdains everything unspiritual and that is wholly wounded by love for God undergoes a strange divine ecstasy.… Surpassing its own limitations, rebelling against the fetters of the senses and transcending all creatureliness, it penetrates the divine darkness of theology in unutterable silence and – to the degree that grace permits – it perceives, in the spiritual light of inexpressible Wisdom, the beauty of Him who truly is.
>
> *Nikētas Stēthatos, On Spiritual Knowledge 53; cf. Philokalia, PCT4 p.155*

Theology, here, of course, means mystical theology or true mystical experience of God.

Moving to more recent times, twentieth-century Californian mystic, Nancy Mayorga, speaking of a similar experience, writes in her diary concerning her encounter with the "luminous darkness":

> Since October 1947, I have been practising meditation, experiencing at times such ecstatic joy as is almost unbearable to my body.... But lately, within the past two weeks, I have moved over into a tranquillity that can be nothing but contemplation. I see a luminous darkness, and if I hold that sight in a spirit of resignation, expectancy, but total self-surrender – intense self-surrender – then my whole being loses itself to burn in that luminous darkness with a sweetness and delight that brings me near to fainting, that afterwards brings tears to my eyes at the remembrance. St John says the soul is being burned free of its impurities.
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM p.7*

She is referring here to John of the Cross, who speaks of the soul's purification and purgation in the dark night, a term not identical in meaning, but clearly drawn from the same imagery.

See also: **cloud of unknowing**, **dark night**, **mystical theology**.

1. *Acts* 17:34.
2. Dionysius the Areopagite, *Mystical Theology* 1; *cf. DNMT* pp.191–92, *WDA1* pp.130–31.
3. *Exodus* 13:21–22, 14:19–20, 24, 16:10, 19:9, 16, 24:15–18, 33:9–10, 34:5, 40:34–38.
4. *Exodus* 16:10, *KJV.*
5. *Exodus* 19:9.
6. *Exodus* 19:16, 20:18.
7. *Exodus* 24:15–18.
8. *Exodus* 20:21.
9. Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of Moses, PG44* cols.377c *ff., VMTP* 2:167*ff., GGG* p.130.
10. Gregory of Nyssa, *On Canticles* 3, *PG44* cols.828c *ff., GGG* pp.170–71.
11. See Andrew Louth, *Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition, OCM* pp.80–98.
12. Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of Moses, PG44* cols.376c *ff., VMTP* 2:162*ff., GGG* p.118.
13. *Book of Privy Counselling* 7, *CUCW* p.181; see also *Cloud of Unknowing* 70.

divine marriage See **spiritual marriage**.

dravya (S) *Lit.* substance, thing, object; the external or material aspect of something; in Jainism, commonly contrasted with *bhāva,* the internal or mental aspect of the same thing. See **bhāva**.

dṛishṭi (S/H), **diṭṭhi** (Pa), **drishṭi**, **drisṭi**, **drisṭ** (Pu), **lta ba** (T), **jiàn** (C), **ken** (J) *Lit.* looking, viewing, beholding; look, glance, gaze; vision, sight; insight, perception, wisdom; view, opinion, belief, perspective; regard, reflection; from the Sanskrit root *d-ṛi-sh* (to see, to look at, to know, to discern); also, the focused, contemplative attention that is practised during meditation; a special look or glance from a spiritually evolved soul, conveying spiritual power and uplift to the recipient.

Dṛishṭi is often used more or less synonymously with *darshana* (vision, perception, seeing, looking at, observing, noticing, view, opinion, belief, *etc.*). *Darshana* refers to the opinion or belief *per se; dṛishṭi* to the act of seeing, or believing, or having such a viewpoint. While *dṛishṭi* can mean both true and false beliefs, *darshana* on its own never refers to a false belief.

In Buddhism, *dṛishṭi* generally refers to an opinion, view, belief or doctrine that is regarded as speculative, false, or incorrect. In this context, a 'view' is not so much a conceptual and intellectual viewpoint on things, but a deeply felt perspective that colours one's thinking and affects one's interpretation of all experience – sensory or mental. It arises from and in turn influences the mental habituation and conditioning that have been grooved into one's mind during the course of the present and previous lives. A proper understanding of the nature of views is therefore essential to a practising Buddhist.

According to the *Dhammapada,* the Buddha says that those who ignore the teachings of the *arahantas* or *ariyas* (noble ones, enlightened ones) have to reap the fruit of their actions, just as many species of bamboo die after bearing fruit (which happens only infrequently):

> The foolish man, who scorns the teaching of the *arahantas,*
> the noble ones *(ariyas)* and the righteous
> on account of false notions *(diṭṭhi),*
> bears fruit to his own destruction,
> even as fruit of the bamboo *(kaṭṭhaka).*
>
> *Dhammapada 12:8*

An erroneous viewpoint or belief is defined specifically as *mithyā-dṛishṭi* (Pa. *micchā-diṭṭhi*), which is contrasted with *samyag-dṛishṭi* (right viewpoint; Pa. *sammā-diṭṭhi*), the first of the eight noble truths, the understanding and

practice of which leads to the end of suffering. One of the most frequently mentioned 'erroneous beliefs' is *satkāya-dṛishṭi* (Pa. *sakkāya-diṭṭhi*) or *ātma-dṛishṭi* (Pa. *atta-diṭṭhi*), which means 'self view' or 'belief in a self', referring to the illusion of a separate self.

Many kinds of *dṛishṭi* – of opinions deemed either true or false – are mentioned in Buddhist literature, but according to the *Arthavargīya Sūtra,* the Buddha says simply that to find the Truth "all this chatter" must be abandoned:

> It is not by opinion *(dṛishṭi),* tradition *(shruti),* knowledge *(jñāna)*
> or morality *(shīla)* that it is attained.
> It is not by absence of opinion, tradition, *etc.,*
> nor by absence of morality that it is attained.
>
> It is by abandoning all this chatter,
> by also rejecting the 'me' and the 'mine' *(ātmātmīya),*
> by not grasping any real nature *(dharma-lakshaṇa),*
> that the Path can be attained.
>
> *Arthavargīya Sūtra, in Mahāprajñāpāramitā Shāstra 2,*
> *T25 1509:63c–64a; cf. TVW1 p.71*

In Jain terminology, *dṛishṭi* generally means viewpoint or opinion, appearing in terms such as *mithyā-dṛishṭi, samyag-dṛishṭi, ekānta-dṛishṭi* (one-sided or biased viewpoint), *anekānta-dṛishṭi* (non-one-sided, all-round, or many-sided viewpoint), *mūḍha-dṛishṭi* (confused belief, blind orthodoxy), *amūḍha-dṛishṭi* (clear understanding), and so on. One of the earliest Jain texts, no longer extant, is known as the *Dṛishṭivāda* ('Statement of Belief'). The term also appears in the title of the book *Yogadṛishṭi Samuchchaya* ('Collection of *Yoga* Perspectives') by the Jain scholar Haribhadra (*fl.c.*750 CE), in which he speaks of eight stages of *dṛishṭi* (spiritual vision)[1] corresponding to the eight stages of Patañjali's *yoga,* as outlined in the *Yoga Sūtras.* The eight stages reflect the growing love for the spiritual Truth or Reality, *i.e. samyag-dṛishṭi,* in the heart of a seeker.

In Hindu tradition, *dṛishṭi* is used in expressions such as *divya-dṛishṭi* (S) or *dibb drishṭi* (Pu. divine vision),[2] also called *dūra-dṛishṭi* (far sightedness) and *divya-chakshus* (divine eye); *sūkshma-dṛishṭi* (subtle sight, keen vision), perception of the subtle aspects of the material universe;[3] *sama-dṛishṭi* (same, equal or even vision, impartiality), synonymous with *sama-darshana;* and *antar-dṛishṭi* (inner vision). The *Maṇḍala-brāhmaṇa Upanishad* speaks of three kinds of yogic contemplation: *amā-dṛishṭi* (new-moon gaze) is practised with closed eyes; *pratipad-dṛishṭi* (first-day moon gaze) with the eyes half-open (*pratipad* is the first day of a lunar fortnight); and *pūrṇimā-dṛishṭi* (full-moon gaze) with the eyes wide open.[4] Some yogic postures and

mudrās stipulate that the gaze *(dṛishṭi)* should be fixed at the tip of the nose *(nāsāgra),*[5] or at the centre in the forehead behind the eyes, or at one of the lower *chakras.* In the yogic and *sant* traditions, the *dṛishṭi* of a master or holy man refers to a grace-filled glance by which he transfers spiritual power and bliss to a disciple.

See also: **ashṭānga yoga** (8.5), **darshana**, **dṛishṭi** (7.5), **samyag-dṛishṭi**.

1. Haribhadra, *Yogadṛishṭi Samuchchaya* 12–65, 178–86.
2. *E.g. Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā* 2:30, 3:96, *HYP* pp.17, 43.
3. *Shiva Saṃhitā* 3:54.
4. *Maṇḍala-brāhmaṇa Upanishad* 2:1.
5. *E.g. Gheraṇḍa Saṃhitā* 2:8*ff.; Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā* 1:46, *HYP* p.8.

dùnwù (C), **tongo** (J) *Lit.* sudden *(dùn)* awakening *(wù);* enlightenment that arises from a sudden recognition of one's own innate *buddha*-nature.

Whether attainment of enlightenment is sudden or gradual was an ongoing debate among early medieval *Chán* and *Zen* Buddhist schools. Gradual awakening *(jiànwù)* implies that enlightenment results from the gradual removal of inner impurities, generally over a number of lifetimes. The notion of sudden awakening *(dùnwù)* is based on the understanding that all beings are inherently enlightened by virtue of their innate *buddha*-nature *(fóxìng),* and enlightenment consists of consciously recognizing this truth. The belief is founded on an extreme view of the *Mahāyāna* principle that all aspects of duality are essentially unreal, including pairs of opposites such as ignorance and enlightenment, practice and attainment, and *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa.* That being so, there is nowhere to go, nothing to attain, and nothing to change or purify. No scriptures need be studied, since the mind is and always has been inherently enlightened. All that is required is realization of this fact; consequently, enlightenment can happen instantaneously. In practice, things were somewhat different, and although *Chán* and *Zen* doctrine stressed the potential for sudden enlightenment, students continued to practise meditation and live within the rules of good conduct, according to normal Buddhist principles, hoping one day to attain enlightenment.[1]

Moreover, there was no single and clear-cut interpretation of the doctrine. Different *Chán* and *Zen* schools developed a range of ideas and associated terminology based upon various permutations of the two viewpoints. One commonly mentioned classification suggests that a sudden initial awakening of the understanding *(jiěwù)* that one is indeed a *buddha* is followed by a lengthy period of gradual cultivation *(jiànxiū),* culminating in final realization-awakening *(zhèngwù).* The whole process is known as *dùnwù*

jiànxiū (sudden awakening and gradual cultivation), and indicates that initial awakenings are not final enlightenment and are followed by gradual refinement through purification.

According to the *Chán* master Yǎngshān Huìjí (814–890), although there may be a very rare seeker who has the potential for sudden enlightenment, for the remainder the process is gradual, often not attainable in the present lifetime. All are struggling along as best they can, some more ardently than others. Master Yǎngshān's assertion is recorded as part of a dialogue in *Jǐngdé chuándēng lù* ('*Jǐngdé* Era Records of the Transmission of the Lamp'):

> A monk asked, "The school of *Chán* maintains the theory of sudden enlightenment *(dùnwù).* How does one attain sudden enlightenment *(dùnwù)?*"
>
> The master replied, "To attain sudden enlightenment *(dùnwù)* is very difficult. If a student of *Chán* is a man of great (spiritual) capacity and deeply rooted in profound wisdom (from previous lives), he may grasp a thousand things in a moment and thus become totally enlightened. However, a man of such capacity is rare. Therefore the ancient sages said that those of lesser talents should content themselves with their meditation and be pure in thought; for if they aimed at sudden enlightenment, they would be entirely lost."
>
> *Transmission of the Lamp 11, T51 2076:283c9–13; cf. TBTL p.217*

In fact, even if enlightenment comes suddenly, there will have been a long and gradual build-up to the event. Were it not so, *Chán* and *Zen* monasteries, both now and in the past, would be full of enlightened monks, which is manifestly not the case.

According to the traditional view, it was the Southern School (C. *Nánzōng*) of Chinese *Chán* who believed in sudden enlightenment, and the Northern School (C. *Běizōng*), who understood enlightenment to be the result of gradual spiritual evolution and purification. Of the two, Japanese *Zen* Buddhism has been more influenced by the Southern school. *Zen* Buddhist teachers who have attempted to induce a sudden enlightenment experience have done so by a variety of means – such as asking a question that has no logical answer (a *kōan*), or answering a question with a paradoxical or nonsensical reply, or shouting into the disciple's ear, or even striking the disciple. These shock methods were drawn from the Southern schools of the late *Táng* (618–907) and early *Sòng* (960–1279) dynasties. The intention was to startle the student out of his conceptual thinking into the realm of pure consciousness, forcing him to rely on his own inner resources.

The process of gradual enlightenment is epitomized by a well-known verse attributed to Shénxiù (606–706) in the *Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch.* Enlightenment achieved gradually is like a mirror in need of cleansing:

Our body is the *bodhi* tree,
 our mind a mirror bright.
Carefully wipe them hour by hour,
 and let no dust alight.
Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch (Liùzǔ tánjīng) 1,
T48 2008:348b; cf. SWLL p.15

Shénxiù was the head monk in the monastery of the fifth patriarch (Hóngrěn), and (according to the story related in the *sūtra*), Hóngrěn had requested the monks to compose a verse in order to determine who would be his *Dharma* successor. Shénxiù was regarded as the most likely candidate, and his fellow monks declined to compete with him, and it was only after some heart-searching that Shénxiù wrote his verse. However, on hearing Shénxiù's verse, the layman Huìnéng composed a verse expressing a higher understanding:

There is no *bodhi* tree,
 nor stand of mirror bright.
Since all is emptiness,
 where can the dust alight?
Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch (Liùzǔ tánjīng) 1,
T48 2008:349a; cf. SWLL p.18

Huìnéng is saying that the innate *buddha*-nature is beyond all things and phenomena. Nothing actually exists, neither enlightenment nor purification. Everything is a part of the ultimate void or "emptiness".

As a result of this poem, according to the events related by Huìnéng in the *Platform Sūtra,* Huìnéng was appointed as the sixth patriarch. Shénxiù subsequently established what became known as the Northern School, which eventually died out, while Huìnéng's school became known as the Southern School, surviving to the present day, especially in the form of Japanese *Zen.* Shénxiù taught that enlightenment was a gradual process, while Huìnéng believed in sudden enlightenment, and developed various forms of shock treatment in the endeavour to help his disciples realize this goal.[2]

Huìnéng's perspective was based on his own experience. He indicates in the *Platform Sūtra* that his rapid understanding of Buddhist texts and subsequent enlightenment arose from karmic connections in past births,[3] and this became his approach when teaching others. Nevertheless, Huìnéng acknowledges that it is the difference between the spiritual propensity or capacity of individuals that gives rise to the seemingly 'gradual' or 'sudden' attainment of enlightenment. The *Dharma* is one and so is enlightenment, says Huìnéng. The *Platform Sūtra* also relates that Shénxiù himself acknowledged Huìnéng's greater wisdom:

> The master (Huìnéng) told the assembly, "The *Dharma* is originally one doctrine; it is people who think of north and south. The *Dharma* is a single seed, but people grasp it slowly or rapidly. What is it that is named sudden or gradual *(dùnjiàn)?* The *Dharma* itself has no sudden or gradual *(dùnjiàn);* it is people who are sharp or dull, hence the terms sudden and gradual *(dùnjiàn).*"
>
> Even so, Shénxiù's followers frequently ridiculed the southern patriarch (Huìnéng), saying that he was completely illiterate, so how could one expect anything different? Yet Shénxiù himself said, "He (*i.e.* Huìnéng) has attained wisdom without the help of a teacher and has a profound understanding of *Mahāyāna.* I have not. In fact, my teacher, the fifth patriarch, personally transmitted the robe and *Dharma* to him – how could this possibly have been in error? I regret I am unable to make the long journey to be close to him, but unworthily receive state patronage here. But you people – do not linger here; go to Cáoxī and listen to Huìnéng and have your doubts resolved!"
>
> *Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch (Liùzǔ tánjīng) 1, T48 2008:358b8–14; cf. PSPM p.72, SPDS pp.337–38*

Huìnéng, portrayed as an illiterate woodcutter, relates that he came to the fifth patriarch through an experience of sudden enlightenment received when he heard someone reciting the *Diamond Sūtra.* This enlightenment was clearly of an initial nature:

> The great master told the assembly, "Good friends, *bodhi* (enlightenment) is fundamentally pure in its self-nature. You only have to use this mind (that you already have), and you will achieve buddhahood directly and completely.
>
> Good friends, listen well! This is the story of how I practised and attained the *Dharma.* My father was a native of Fànyáng (now Zhuō Xiàn, Héběi province), but he was banished to Lǐngnán and became a commoner in Xīnzhōu (now Xīnxīng Xiàn, Guǎngdōng province). I was unfortunate, for my father died early, and my aged mother and I, her only child, moved here to Nánhǎi. Miserably poor, I sold firewood in the marketplace.
>
> "On one occasion, a customer bought some firewood and had me deliver it to his shop, where he took it and paid me. On my way out of the gate I saw someone reciting a *sūtra,* and as soon as I heard the words of the *sūtra* my mind opened forth in enlightenment."
>
> *Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch (Liùzǔ tánjīng) 1, T48 2008:347c–48a; cf. PSPM p.17*

Huìnéng asks the man for the name of the *sūtra* and where he had heard it, and he is directed to Hóngrěn's monastery. Some months later, having impressed Hóngrěn with his verse concerning the "mirror bright", Hóngrěn called him, preached the *Diamond Sūtra* to him, and made him his successor:

> "At midnight the fifth patriarch called me into the hall and expounded the *Diamond Sūtra* to me. Hearing it but once, I was immediately awakened, and that night I received the *Dharma.* None of the others knew anything about it. Then he transmitted to me the *Dharma* of sudden enlightenment *(dùnjiào)* and the robe, saying: 'I make you the sixth patriarch. The robe is the proof and is to be handed down from generation to generation. My *Dharma* must be transmitted from mind to mind. You must make people awaken to themselves.'"
>
> *Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch (Liùzǔ tánjīng) 1, T48 2007:338a14–18, PSSP p.133*

Hóngrěn also instructed Huìnéng to flee the monastery to avoid repercussions arising from the jealousy of the other monks.

The debate concerning sudden or gradual enlightenment was not confined to China and Japan. The matter is also said to have been influential in the development of Tibetan Buddhism. In fact, it was the subject of the best-known debate in the history of Tibetan Buddhism, the Great Debate of the Council of Lhasa, which was actually a series of debates spanning two years (792–794) that took place in the city of Samye at the Samye Monastery, situated some distance from Lhasa, the capital city of Tibet. The instigator of the debates was King Trisong Detsen of Tibet who, at the time, was entertaining suspicions that the *Chán* monk he had invited from China to settle at Samye Monastery was not teaching the true *Dharma.*

The main protagonists were the Indian monk Kamalashīla and the Chinese *Chán* master Héshang Móhēyǎn. The subject was whether enlightenment *(bodhi)* is a spontaneous experience that suddenly happens to a meditator, in which all impurities and defilements are burned and destroyed and enlightenment is attained, or whether it is the result of a long and gradual process of spiritual transformation accomplished by following the noble path and by living the *Dharma.* Kamalashīla defended the gradual process while Héshang defended the sudden viewpoint. According to Tibetan historians, Kamalashīla won the debate, Héshang Móhēyǎn was ordered to leave the country, and all texts pertaining to the path of sudden enlightenment were destroyed by royal decree. This event is said to have had a profound influence on Tibetan Buddhism, which continued to follow the Indian gradualist path, with diminishing influence from China.

See also: **běnjué**, **thod rgal** (8.5), **wúxīn**.

1. See "Ch'an-tsung," *Oxford Dictionary of Buddhism, ODB, passim.*
2. See *Blue Cliff Records, TZC* p.160.
3. *Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch* 1, *T48* 2008:348a–b, 350a, 353c.

ecstasy (Gk. *ekstasis*) Spiritually, a state of supreme bliss or joy arising from contact with the Divine; also called rapture or ravishing; from the Greek, *ekstasis* (displacement, going out), thus – interpreted mystically – a 'going out' from one's self and all created things towards the Divine, drawn by love and intense longing; rising above all conceptual and discursive thinking, sometimes to the extent that all consciousness of the body and all externals, as well as all the normal mental faculties associated with the external world, are temporarily suspended. In ancient Greece, *ekstasis* was used for trance-like states experienced by participants in the various mystery cults, from whom the later Greek mystical philosophers borrowed the terminology, adapting it to their own use.

Plotinus uses *ekstasis* in its literal sense of 'going out' or 'moving out'. He says, for example, that the movement towards the inner peace and rest of divine union is a process of leaving the little self behind. It is

> a going forth *(ekstasis)* from oneself, a simplifying and renunciation, a moving towards (divine) contact and rest, an all-encompassing awareness *(perinoēsis).*
>
> *Plotinus, Enneads 6:9.11; cf. PA7 pp.342–43, PEC p.360*

He also says that the ultimate state of rest (*hēsychia,* stillness), where the *nous* (spirit) rests within itself, is the converse of *ekstasis:*

> The stillness *(hēsychia)* of the spirit *(nous)* is not a going out *(ekstasis)* of the spirit *(nous),* but … an activity in which the spirit takes its rest apart from all that is alien.
>
> *Plotinus, Enneads 5:3.7; cf. PA5 pp.92–95, PEC p.219*

Ecstasy can also refer to states of frenzy and uncontrolled emotion, perhaps infused with a degree of bliss, as in some forms of ecstatic dance. Some of the prophets, oracles or sibyls of ancient Greece, as well as biblical prophets, also gave their pronouncements while in a state of ecstatic trance or divine frenzy, as depicted by the first-century Alexandrian Jew, Philo Judaeus, "the mind being evicted on arrival of the Holy Spirit".[1]

In fact, Philo enumerates four kinds of ecstasy – madness, astonishment, tranquillity, and prophetic inspiration:

> Ecstasy *(ekstasis)* or 'moving out' takes different forms. Sometimes, it is a mad fury producing mental delusion due to old age or melancholy

> or other similar cause. Sometimes, it is extreme amazement at the events that so often happen suddenly and unexpectedly. Sometimes, it is tranquillity of mind, if indeed the mind can ever be at rest; and the best form of all is the divine possession or frenzy, to which the prophets as a class are subject.
>
> *Philo Judaeus, Who Is the Heir of Divine Things? 51; cf. PCW4 pp.408–11*

Philo goes on to provide biblical examples of each,[2] but it is the prophetic kind of ecstasy that he esteems the most highly, a state he attributes to Abraham:

> The fourth kind of ecstasy, we find in the passage, . . . "About sunset there fell upon Abraham an ecstasy *(ekstasis),*"[3] that is, what the inspired and God-possessed experience. . . . Now with every good man, it is the holy Word which assures him his gift of prophecy.
>
> *Philo Judaeus, Who Is the Heir of Divine Things? 52, PCW4 pp.414–17*

Though generally arising as a result of spiritual practice or prayer, divine ecstasy is commonly regarded as the grace of God, since it appears spontaneously and cannot be experienced at will. Christian writers, especially, have deliberated on how to identify ecstasies believed to originate with God, and those prompted by the devil.[4] They have also provided various definitions of ecstasy. John of the Cross says that "Ecstasy is nothing but the going forth of a soul from itself, and its being caught up in God."[5]

Jerónimo Gracián, a younger contemporary of Teresa of Ávila, provides a number of definitions. Ecstasy, which he identifies with rapture, is "a soaring or flight of the soul above the measure of its natural powers", "a profound sleep of the soul wherein the understanding and the will are watching", "a withdrawal of the soul to its most secret hiding place", "a prayer of recollection", "the soul's forgetfulness of all that it was once in the habit of remembering", and "a divine perturbation".[6]

Dionysius the Areopagite, whose writings many later Christian mystics regarded as a manual of the mystical life, describes ecstasy as being carried out of oneself into the "divine darkness" within:

> By unceasing and absolute withdrawal from yourself and all things, abandoning all restraint in pure and absolute ecstasy *(ekstasis),* and being set free from all, you will be borne upwards to the radiance of the divine darkness *(theiou skotous aktis)* that lies beyond all existence.
>
> *Pseudo-Dionysius, Mystical Theology 1; cf. in CU p.25, DNMT pp.191–92, in OCM p.175, JTPM p.239, WDA1 p.130*

An experience which he also attributes to St Paul:

> So also the great Paul, caught up in rapture by divine love and participating in its ecstatic power, said with inspired speech, "I live and yet not I, but Christ lives in me."[7] As a true lover, caught up out of himself into God, he lives not his own life, but that life so much longed for, the life of his Beloved.
>
> *Pseudo-Dionysius, Divine Names 4:13.712a, in OCM p.176*

In practice, although various writers and mystics have used terms such as ecstasy, rapture, union, suspension of the faculties and so on for a range of mystical states, there is little consistency in their use. Furthermore, although they clearly share common ground, the experiences of different mystics vary according to their individual temperament, belief system, and ingrained cultural imagery. Sometimes, ecstasy is a general term, used synonymously with bliss or joy. At other times, it refers to a state in which the world is altogether forgotten, a state also known as suspension of the faculties or rapture. In places, ecstasy is distinguished from tranquillity or peace, in the sense that ecstasy implies inward ardour, fervour or even frenzy, while tranquillity implies complete peace. Sometimes, ecstasy is experienced in deep contemplation of the inner darkness; sometimes, the soul ecstatically gazes at the inner light. The underlying reality is that mystics enjoy many varieties of experience, and the vocabulary available in any language to describe these various experiences is limited and by no means standardized.

St Teresa equates ecstasy, rapture, elevation and transport, but distinguishes them from union, by the greater range and depth of the experience:

> I should like, with God's help, to be able to describe the difference between union and rapture, or as they call it, elevation or flight of the spirit, or transport. These latter terms, though different, all refer to the same thing, which is also called ecstasy. The advantage of rapture over union is great, because its effects are stronger, and it produces many other phenomena. Union seems the same at the beginning, in the middle and at the end, and it all takes place in the interior of the soul. But raptures are of a higher degree, and their effects are both interior and exterior.
>
> *Teresa of Ávila, Life 20; cf. CWT1 p.172, CWTA1 p.119*

In St Teresa's case, her ecstasies or raptures included spontaneous levitation,[8] as well as other bodily phenomena and internal experiences. As she explains:

> When He means to enrapture this soul, it loses its power of breathing, with the result that, although its other senses sometimes remain active a little longer, it cannot possibly speak. At other times, it loses all its powers at once, and the hands and the body grow so cold that

> the body seems no longer to have a soul – sometimes it even seems doubtful if there is any breath in the body. This lasts only for a short time (I mean, only for a short period at any one time) because, when this profound suspension lifts a little, the body seems to come partly to itself again, and draws breath, though only to die once more and, in doing so, to give fuller life to the soul. Complete ecstasy, therefore, does not last long.
>
> But, although relief comes, the ecstasy has the effect of leaving the will so completely absorbed and the understanding so completely transported – for as long as a day, or even for several days – that the soul seems incapable of grasping anything that does not awaken the will to love; to this it is fully awake, while asleep as regards all that concerns attachment to any creature.
>
> *Teresa of Ávila, Interior Castle 6:4, CWTA2 p.291*

François de Sales also equates ecstasy and rapture. If there is a difference, it is that rapture attracts and lifts up the soul, while ecstasy takes it beyond self, into union with God:

> Ecstasy is given the name of rapture, since it is a state in which God attracts us and lifts us up to Him. Rapture is called ecstasy, because it takes us out of ourselves, holds us above and beyond self, to make us one with God. Wonderfully gentle, charming, delightful as God's attractions are, His goodness and beauty exert such a powerful influence on the soul's attention and concentration that it would seem we are not merely uplifted, but transported, swept away. On the other hand, wholehearted assent and fervent impulse speed the soul in the wake of God's attractions, so that it seems as though it not only rises and ascends, but throws itself, soars out of itself into the very Godhead.
>
> *François de Sales, Love of God 7:4, LGFS pp.281–82*

But both, he says, originate in divine love:

> Ecstasy and rapture . . . are results of love; love is what leads the mind to contemplation, the will to union.
>
> *François de Sales, Love of God 7:5, LGFS p.284*

Gregory of Sinai similarly suggests that rapture is the ascent of the soul, while ecstasy implies rising completely above self and the material world:

> Rapture *(ekplēxis)* means the total elevation of the soul's powers towards the majesty of divine glory, disclosed as an undivided unity. Or again rapture is a pure and all-embracing ascent towards the limitless

> power that dwells in light. Ecstasy *(ekstasis)* is not only the heavenward ravishing of the soul's powers, it is also complete transcendence of the sense world itself.
>
> *Gregory of Sinai, On Commandments 58, Philokalia, PCT4 p.222*

Isaac of Nineveh, writing in Syriac, in which the two terms used for ecstasy both have a primary meaning of 'wonder', has much to say on the subject. Ecstasy, he says, is preceded by "pure prayer of the mind", but is experienced at a higher level, beyond prayer. It is the "fruit of pure prayer, . . . engulfed in the Spirit":

> The mind ascends there above prayer. And having found something more excellent, it prays no longer, but gazes in ecstasy at unattainable things that do not belong to the world of mortals; and it is at peace ignoring all earthly things. . . .
>
> Then your eyes are opened to see God's creating Power and the beauty of all creatures, in accordance with the degree of your purity. And when the mind has been caught up in ecstasy by this sight, night and day become as one, on account of the glory of God's works.
>
> *Isaac of Nineveh, Treatises 22, 66; cf. in BDH pp.xcvii, MTIN pp.118, 316*

Henry Suso, writing of himself in the third person, describes a personal experience of ecstasy:

> At the beginning of his life in religion it once happened that on St Agnes Day,[9] after the midday meal in the refectory, he went into the choir. He was alone there and stood in the lower row at the right hand of the choir. At this time, he was very depressed by a great sorrow that weighed down upon him. As he stood there, disconsolate and solitary, he went into an ecstasy and saw and heard what is ineffable. It was without form or shape, and yet it bore within itself all forms and shapes of joyous delight. His heart was hungry and yet satisfied, his mind joyous and happy, his wishes were calmed and his desires had died out. He did nothing but gaze into the brilliant light, in which he had forgotten himself and all things. He did not know whether it was day or night. It was a sweetness flowing out of eternal life, with present, unchanging peaceful feeling. He said then: "If this is not heaven, I do not know what heaven is, for all the suffering that can ever be put into words, could not enable anyone to earn such a reward and forever possess it."
>
> This blissful ecstasy lasted perhaps an hour, perhaps only half an hour; whether his soul remained in his body, or was separated from his body, he did not know.[10] When he came to himself, he felt just like a man who has come from another world. His body felt such pain in

> that short moment that he thought no one could possibly suffer such pain in so short a time, save in death. He then came to himself in some way or other, and sighed from the depths of his soul, and his body sank to the ground as if in a fainting fit. He cried out in his heart: "Alas, God, where was I, where am I now?", and said: "Beloved, this hour can never die in my heart."
>
> He walked with his body, and no one saw or noticed anything outwardly in him, but his soul and his heart were inwardly full of heavenly wonders. The celestial visions went in and out in his deepest depths, and he felt somehow as if he was hovering in the air. The powers of his soul were filled with sweet heavenly scent just as if one pours a good balsam out of a box, and the box afterwards retains a sweet smell. This heavenly odour remained with him a long time afterwards, and gave him a heavenly longing for God.
>
> *Henry Suso, Life of the Servant 1:2, LSS pp.19–20*

In a more modern context, twentieth-century Californian mystic, Nancy Mayorga, writes in her diary of her journey through ecstasy to pure tranquillity. The excerpts need no introduction:

> My first taste of the divine was miracle enough for a lifetime. I was carried upwards by the current of primal life and energy, swept out of my little self into an ecstasy, a triumph, an astonishment that nothing in previous experience or imagination could have prepared me for.
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM p.22*

> Since October 1947, I have been practising meditation, experiencing at times such ecstatic joy as is almost unbearable to my body.... But lately, within the past two weeks, I have moved over into a tranquillity that can be nothing but contemplation. I see a luminous darkness, and if I hold that sight in a spirit of resignation, expectancy but total self-surrender, intense self-surrender, then my whole being loses itself to burn in that luminous darkness with a sweetness and delight that brings me near to fainting, that afterwards brings tears to my eyes at the remembrance.
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM p.7*

> Last night He woke me at eleven-thirty with such a tremendous current of bliss flowing upwards in me that I thought surely I would be lost in *samādhi.* And though I had a slight feeling of regret that I might go into *samādhi* lying down, my will was not my own. I was simply caught and held by His will. I actually could not move a muscle while that bliss held me. Even though I wanted to get up, I had at least ten

> minutes of this paralysis of ecstasy before I was freed to put on my robe and sit in my chair to meditate, ten minutes of absolute helpless immobility while that current surged, welled, swept, pounded through me. Current of joy. Current of bliss. Current of ecstasy. Current of God's love. My God.
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM p.74*

> Now I am beginning to know that there are two levels of divine ecstasy. On the surface level, the body participates. There is the thrill of delight, the divine fire courses through the veins, the whole body throbs. But at the deeper level of ecstasy, the body has no part. It is soul to Soul. It is, as John of the Cross says, "the deep and soft voice of God, Who speaks to the heart in solitude; it is in profound peace and tranquillity that the soul is to listen to God."[11] That tranquillity is fathomless, and the joy indescribable. Just one tranquil sea of joy.
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM pp.117–18*

Later on, she moves into a state of such inner peace and stillness that even the ecstasy seems a hindrance:

> Ecstasy can become an end in itself, and if it does, spiritual progress stops.
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM p.38*

> More frequently now my mind is drawn to that very deep state where the presence of God is explicit, incontestable. And ecstasy, which was once the goal and reward of all my endeavour, becomes increasingly unimportant, even at times a nuisance.
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM p.117*

> Now all bliss and ecstasy is simply reminiscence.... To hold the mind in that state of heightened awareness, without any tension, yearning for that ultimate union, without any tension – it calls for the most in patience and faith and stamina. Faith! Faith! Without Swami to bolster me, I could not do it. He has taught me faith and patience and the meaning of love.
>
> "Do not even think of that," he said. So I just strive to hold the mind in that deep, deep state, which is incredibly deep. No bliss, no ecstasy, just stillness. Incredible!
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM pp.118–19*

> Oh, to hold this deep, dark state, so full of peace and promise! No ecstasy these days. Just a constant struggle to surrender and let Him

> take over. I wonder if He knows, if He sees me, if He hears my cry. But of course He does. He is the Self of my self.
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM pp.126–27*

Again from more modern times, ʿInāyat Khān summarizes the nature of ecstasy in simple terms:

> Ecstasy is the greatest happiness, the greatest bliss. A person always thinks, "I am this which I see. This small amount of flesh and blood, bones and skin is I." By ecstasy, the consciousness is freed from this body, from this confinement. It experiences its true existence above all sorrow, pain and trouble. That is the greatest joy. To experience it, and to keep control of the body and the senses through which we experience all the life of this world is to have balance. That is the highest state.
>
> *ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK8 pp.15–16*

See also: **bliss**, **exaltation**, **intoxication**, **rapture**.

1. Philo Judaeus, *Who Is the Heir of Divine Things?* 53; *cf. PCW4* pp.418–19.
2. Madness: *Deuteronomy* 28:28–29; astonishment: *Genesis* 27:33, 45:26, *Exodus* 19:18, *Leviticus* 9:24; tranquillity: *Genesis* 2:21.
3. *Genesis* 15:12.
4. *E.g.* John of the Cross, *Dark Night* 2:3, *CWJC1* p.333.
5. John of the Cross, *Points of Love* 65; *cf. CWJC3* p.233.
6. Jerónimo Gracián, *On Mental Prayer, LECP* fol.128–34, *passim; cf.* in *SSM2* p.136.
7. *Galatians* 2:20; *cf. KJV.*
8. *E.g.* Teresa of Ávila, *Life* 20:4–5, *CWT1* pp.173–74; Maria de San Jerónimo, *On Saint Teresa, CWTA3* p.341; Pedro Ibanez, *On Saint Teresa, CWTA3* pp.320–21.
9. January 21st.
10. *2 Corinthians* 12:3.
11. John of the Cross, *Living Flame of Love* 3:6, *WSJ2* p.270.

ekādasha-jñāna (S) *Lit.* eleven *(ekādashan)* knowledges *(jñāna);* eleven forms of knowledge, of which ten were drawn from the Buddhist Pali *suttas* and classified by the Sanskrit *Abhidharma,* and an eleventh was added by *Mahāyāna* sources. See **dasha-jñāna**.

ekāgratā, **chitta-ekāgratā** (S/H/Pu), **ekaggatā**, **citta-ekaggatā** (Pa) *Lit.* one *(eka)* in front of *(agratas)* mind *(chitta);* one-pointed mind; one-pointedness;

mystically, one-pointed, intense or undisturbed concentration or focused attention in meditation; a state of meditation in which the mind is fixed on only one point or object; close and undivided attention; determination, steadfastness, concentration; tenacity of purpose; hence also *ekāgra* (S. one-pointed, Pa. *ekagga*); a state of mind essential for the successful attainment of anything in life, spiritual or mundane; a term common to all Indian philosophies. In the context of love and devotion, *ekāgratā* means undivided love and devotion.

It is all a question of controlling the mind:

> In a clean place, neither too high nor too low,
> prepare a seat *(āsana)* out of grass,
> covered with a deerskin and a cloth.
> Firmly seated thereon, to purify the self *(ātman),*
> practise *yoga,* making the mind *(manas)* one-pointed *(ekāgra),*
> with the activity of the mind and senses under control.
>
> *Bhagavad Gītā 6:11–12; cf. BGT*

Such one-pointedness even raises the consciousness to the place where time has its origins, in *Brahman:*

> The state of *samādhi* is attained
> through the elimination of distraction
> and the rise of one-pointedness in mind *(chitta).*
> When the mind *(chitta)* reaches
> the state of one-pointedness *(ekāgratā),*
> then the past and the present seem to become one.
>
> *Patañjali, Yoga Sūtras 3:11–12*

As to practice, the best means to make the mind one-pointed is by listening to the mystic Sound *(Nāda):*

> On hearing the *Nāda,* the mind, like a cobra, immediately becomes captivated and oblivious to all else, and becoming one-pointed *(ekāgra),* does not run elsewhere.
>
> *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā 4:97; cf. HPSD (4:96) p.168, HYP p.60*

This Sound is also known as *Auṃ.* Using the image of archery, the *Muṇḍaka Upanishad* says that this *Auṃ* will shoot the soul or self directly into the target, which is *Brahman:*

> The syllable *Auṃ* is the bow; the self, indeed, is the arrow:
> *Brahman* is spoken of as its target.

It is to be hit without agitation *(apramattena).*
Thus one becomes united with it,
as the arrow (becomes one with the target).

Muṇḍaka Upanishad 2:2.4; cf. PU p.683

Commenting on this passage, Rangarāmānuja (C16th) explains "without agitation *(apramattena)*" as "becoming indifferent to other objects and developing a one-pointed mind *(ekāgrachittena)*".[1]

A similar example of *ekāgratā* is found in the *Mahābhārata.* According to the story, the teacher Droṇāchārya assembles his students, these being the brothers, half-brothers, and cousins of Arjuna. Wishing to test their skill in archery, he makes a wooden bird and fixes it among the upper branches of a tree. Each of the students in turn is then requested to aim at the bird and to hit it with an arrow. But before the arrow is allowed to leave the bow, Droṇa asks them what they can see or upon what they are focusing their attention.

They each reply that they can see the bird, the leaves, the branches, the tree, the sky, the teacher, and all the other students. Droṇa therefore asks them to step aside. None of them is permitted to release an arrow from his bow. Finally, Droṇa asks Arjuna to aim his arrow. On asking what he can see, he replies that he can only see the eye of the bird. Arjuna is then allowed to shoot his arrow and, aiming with complete concentration, he strikes the eye of the bird.[2]

The point is that only by intense and one-pointed concentration, to the exclusion of all other thoughts and mental impulses, can the inner eye be opened. If the attention is still attracted by the outward display of the world, and does not forget the world, the inner eye will not become the exclusive target, and as a result will fail to open.

ʿInāyat Khān also provides an example:

> I remember a *vīṇā*-player, a very wonderful musician, who used to play and study many hours a day, but whenever he had to play before an audience he became self-conscious. The first thought that came to him was himself; and when that happened all the impressions of the people there would fall upon him. Generally, he would take his *vīṇā,* cover it up, and run away. But on the other hand, I have heard Sarah Bernhardt simply recite the Marseillaise, that was all; but when she appeared on the stage and recited this poem, she would win every heart in the audience, for at that time – it was during the war – she *was* France. What enabled her to be France was her concentration, her way of forgetting herself.
>
> *ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK8a p.234*

In Buddhism, *citta-ekaggatā* is a state of mature and advanced meditative concentration in which the mind is totally absorbed and unwaveringly focused on its meditation subject *(kammaṭṭhāna).*

Ekaggatā is the last of the five *jhānangas* (*jhāna* factors) – the aspects and states of mind that a meditator progressively works through, refines, and finally transcends when entering the four *jhānas* (states of meditative absorption). The five *jhānangas* are: *vitakka* (initial thought), *vicāra* (applied and sustained thought), *pīti* (rapture, ecstasy), *sukha* (bliss), and *ekaggatā.* Mental concentration and refinement develop together.

The first *jhāna* is characterized by the presence of all five aspects of mind. With the deepening of concentration and entry into the second *jhāna,* only rapture, bliss, and one-pointedness are present – the coarser modes of thought *(vitakka* and *vicāra)* are transcended. Entry to the third *jhāna* sees the excitement and mental activity associated with rapture being surmounted as the mind develops greater stillness, so that only a purer bliss and one-pointedness remain. In the fourth *jhāna,* only one-pointed focus and complete stillness of mind remains. In this context *citta-ekaggatā* is synonymous with *samādhi* (meditative concentration) and the higher, mystical *upekkhā* (equanimity). Progress through the *jhānas* is understood to be the same as ascent through the various sub-worlds of *rūpaloka* (world of subtle forms, patterns, or archetypes).

The first book of the *Abhidhamma,* the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī,* defines the degree of firm concentration attained in the fourth *jhāna:*

> What is *citta-ekaggatā?* The stability, solidity, absorbed steadfastness of thought which is the absence of distraction, balance, unperturbed mental process, stillness, the faculty and the power of concentration, right concentration – this is *citta-ekaggatā.*
>
> *Dhammasaṅgaṇī 1:11, PTSD p.10, DSPB p.19; cf. BMPE pp.13–14*

The five *jhānangas* are said to be the solutions or antidotes to the five *nīvaraṇas* (hindrances) that prevent entry to the *jhānas:* sensory desire *(kāmacchanda),* ill will *(vyāpāda),* sloth and torpor *(thīna-middha),* restlessness and anxiety *(uddhacca-kukkucca),* and wavering doubt or lack of conviction *(vicikicchā). Ekaggatā* is regarded as the remedy for sensory desire because one-pointedness or concentration is both the starting practice and the final goal of meditation. Mystical or meditative concentration is of the same nature, but of a far higher order than the concentration that people normally experience when focusing on something in this world.

See also: **jhānanga**.

1. Rangarāmānuja, on *Muṇḍaka Upanishad* 2:2.4, in *PU* p.683.

2. *Mahābhārata* 1, *Ādiparva* 131:32, *MMR1* pp.139–42, *MV1* (1:134–35) pp.282–83.

elevation Spiritually, a blissful state in which the soul is seemingly raised up towards the Divine, out of its sense of individual self, to the extent that the body and the mental faculties associated with bodily existence may even be transcended and the functioning of the mental faculties temporarily suspended; also called rapture, ecstasy, ravishing, transport, or suspension of the faculties.

It has sometimes been supposed that God is outside, and that souls ascend to Him through physical space. Among the mystics, the notion has never received serious consideration, nor indeed has it among many others. As St Augustine writes:

> This supposed road to God through physical space is utterly mistaken; it leads men completely astray. It is not the road taken by righteousness, since it is not by physical elevation, but by spiritual – that is incorporeal – likeness to God that we must ascend to God.
>
> *St Augustine, City of God 9:18, CGAP p.365*

Of "rapture, or elevation, or what they call flight of the spirit, or transport", says St Teresa, "it is all one. I mean that these different names all refer to the same thing, which is also called ecstasy."[1] She differentiates, however, "between union and elevation of the spirit", which she also calls "joining with heavenly love". She likens "union" to a small fire and "elevation of the spirit" or "rapture" to a large fire. They are of the same nature, but there is a difference of degree.[2]

She also says that she is sometimes overtaken by states of "recollection and elevation of the spirit" when occupied with mundane things:

> It often happens that, when I am not trying to think of the things of God, but am occupied with other things, and thinking that even if I tried to pray, I would be unable to do so because of great aridity, made worse by bodily pains, that this recollection and elevation of the spirit comes upon me so quickly that I can do nothing to check it. And in a moment I find myself experiencing the effects and benefits which come with it.… And these are such that, even if I tried for a whole year, I do not think that I could possibly have acquired them by my own efforts.
>
> *Teresa of Ávila, Spiritual Relations 1:2; cf. CWT1 p.372, CWTA1 p.306*

See also: **ecstasy**, **rapture**.

1. Teresa of Ávila, *Life* 20:1; *cf. CWT1* p.172, *CWTA1* p.119.
2. Teresa of Ávila, *Life* 18:7, *CWT1* p.160.

emancipation The act or state of being liberated or freed; spiritually, liberation or release from pain, suffering, the individual self, sin, evil, and so on; release from every constraint of body, mind, and all created things; hence also, in some traditions, release from the cycle of birth and death.

Emancipation was the central tenet of Orphism, a powerful, non-philosophical, spiritual movement starting around the sixth century BCE, which later converged with Pythagoreanism. Orphism consisted of small independent groups of people who derived their beliefs from a collection of poems, claimed to be divinely inspired compositions of the Thracian poet, Orpheus:

> The central Orphic doctrine shared by all groups was that there is, in the human person, a divine and an earthly element. The divine in us is an actual being, a *daimōn* or a spirit which has fallen as a result of some primal sin and is entrapped in a series of earthly bodies which may be animal and plant as well as human. It can escape from the 'sorrowful weary wheel', the cycle of reincarnation, by following the Orphic way of life, which involved, besides rituals and incantations, an absolute prohibition of eating flesh and, as it seems, of all use of animal products.
>
> *A.H. Armstrong, Classical Mediterranean Spirituality, CMSA p.99*

"Orphic mud" became a term widely used by later mystics in descriptions of the immortal soul mired in the dross of materiality and in quest of its emancipation. As Plotinus writes:

> If a man has been immersed in filth or daubed with mud, his native comeliness disappears and all that is seen is the foul stuff besmearing him. His ugly condition is due to alien matter that has encrusted him, and if he is to win back his grace it must be his business to scour and purify himself and make himself what he was.... Likewise the soul – let it be but cleared of the desires that come by its too intimate converse with the body, emancipated from all the passions, purged of all that being in the body has thrust upon it. Withdrawn, solitary, with itself again: in that moment the ugliness that came only from the alien is stripped away.
>
> *Plotinus, Enneads 1:6.5; cf. PEC pp.23–24*

Philo Judaeus has the same understanding: "The perfect man always makes perfect emancipation from the passions *(apatheia)* his study."[1] He also

describes the man who has been made perfect by God as the only one who is truly free:

> He alone is a free man, for he is emancipated from that most grievous mistress, vain opinion, whom God the liberator has cast down from her citadel on high, and humbled all her pride.
>
> *Philo Judaeus, On Sobriety 11; cf. PCW3 pp.472–75, WPJ1 p.513*

The Manichaeans, like the Greeks, also believed in transmigration, the saviour or saint being the means to emancipation or liberation from rebirth. As a hymn from Chinese Turkestan in praise of Jesus puts it, using Buddhist terminology that was most probably the religious background of the writer:

> The great saint *(dàshèng)* is … the gate of emancipation *(jiětuō?).*
> O broad and kind, dignified and solemn Jesus Buddha *(Yíshùfó)!*
> Pray, show great mercy and forgive my sins. …
> Guide my escape from this poisonous fiery sea,
> pray give me the fragrant Water of Salvation *(jiětuō shuǐ).*
>
> *Mónífjào xiàbù zàn, T54 2140:1270c17–1271a18;*
> *cf. LSMH (15, 17, 29–30) pp.177–78*

And, likewise, a hymn in praise of Mānī:

> We who are enlightened by the great saint *(dàshèng)*
> must give up all indulgences and passions,
> aspire for contentment at the gate of the true *Dharma (zhèngfǎ),*
> and, crossing the great ocean, industriously seek *nirvāṇa (nièpán).*
> You must also, O men of high character, blessed and virtuous,
> focus your mind, and industriously seek emancipation *(jiětuō).*
> Endeavour, diligently, to develop yourselves:
> slack not, and quickly escape all the horrors of birth and death.
>
> *Mónífjào xiàbù zàn, T54 2140:1272b11–14; cf. LSMH (85–86) p.183*

See also: **freedom**, **liberation**.

1. Philo Judaeus, *Allegorical Interpretation* 3:45; *cf. PCW1* pp.388–89.

enlightenment The state of being enlightened or the act of enlightening; illumination; can be spiritual or intellectual, and applicable to any matter; in Buddhism, spiritual awakening to the ultimate Reality, which gives freedom from reincarnation; in Hinduism, a transcendent experience of the Divine.

Though used for a high and specific state of spiritual realization in Buddhism and Hinduism, the term is used more generally in other traditions for degrees of spiritual enlightenment.

Speaking of the inner divine Light, Plotinus explains how it illumines and enlightens the immortal soul:

> This Light shining within the soul enlightens it; that is, it makes the soul spiritual, working it into likeness with Itself, the Light above.
>
> *Plotinus, Enneads 5:3.8; cf. PEC p.220*

Among the Hermetic texts, the fictional Hermēs Trismegistus expresses gratitude for the experience of this light:

> To you, O God most high, I give my thanks for enlightening me with light to see Divinity.
>
> *Hermetica, Asclepius 32; cf. HAG p.142, HGCH p.87, TGH2 p.373*

Many Christian writers have spoken of an enlightened or illumined reason or understanding, by which they generally mean a deepened understanding of spiritual truths. Unless the soul is the recipient of divine grace, it will never know "enlightenment of the Spirit":

> Unless the Lord shall drop upon the soul from on high, the life of the Godhead, a man will never experience true life, will never recover from the drunkenness of matter; the enlightenment of the Spirit will never shine in that benighted soul, or kindle in it a holy daytime; it will never awaken out of that deepest sleep of ignorance, and so come to know God.
>
> *Macarian Homilies 24:5; cf. SHME p.177*

It is a touch of the Divine that enlightens human understanding:

> The outpouring touch of God quickens us with life in the spirit, and fulfils us with grace, and enlightens our reason, and teaches us to know truth and to discern the virtues, and keeps us stable in the presence of God.… And so soon as we are uplifted through the Son into our Origin, we hear the Voice of the Father, which draws us inward and enlightens us with eternal Truth.
>
> *Jan van Ruysbroek, Sparkling Stone 12, SSJR pp.217–18*

It is God's inspiration that enlightens the mind:

> Once the rays of God's inspirations strike it, however, we are aware of light and life.… Our minds are enlightened, our wills inflamed

> and quickened with strength to intend and fulfil whatever may lead to our salvation.
>
> *François de Sales, Love of God 8:10, LGFS p.340*

Walter Hilton calls it His love:

> Seek this gift of divine love above all else, as I have said, for if God of His grace will give it you, it will open and enlighten your spiritual understanding to see truth, that is, God, and spiritual things.
>
> *Walter Hilton, Ladder of Perfection 1:36, LPH p.210*

The *Celestial Hierarchy,* attributed pseudo-epigraphically to Dionysius the Areopagite, speaks of degrees of enlightenment naturally present among souls. Some are students, some teachers:

> Some are being purified and others purify; some are being enlightened while others enlighten; some are being perfected while others complete the perfecting initiation for others.
>
> *Pseudo-Dionysius, Celestial Hierarchy 3:1, in OCM p.170*

The source of enlightenment is always from within. Nevertheless, an enlightened soul can engender enlightenment in others. Such a person is described in the *Clementine Homilies* as a "true prophet", by which is meant both Jesus and other mystics of a similar calibre:

> The man who is the helper I call the true prophet; and He alone is able to enlighten the souls of men, so that with our own eyes we may be able to see the way of eternal salvation.
>
> *Clementine Homilies I:19, CH pp.28–29*

In gnostic texts, the enlightening saviour is a key aspect of the drama of salvation. Throughout the *Kephalaia,* the mystic Mānī is called "the Enlightener", a role also accredited to Jesus, as in the Manichaean psalm, "You are a mighty light: Jesus, enlighten me."[1] Elsewhere, the devotee prays to Jesus for enlightenment:

> Many are the labours that I suffered
> while I was in this dark house (the body).
> You, therefore, my true light, enlighten me within.
> Set me up, for I have tumbled down,
> and help me with you to the Height.
>
> *Manichaean Psalm Book; cf. MPB p.152*

Among the Mandaean texts, a devotee indicates that it is the divine Word that brings enlightenment:

> You enlighten them by Your Word, sublime and pure,
> and glorify the worlds by Your glory.
> *Mandaean Prayer Book 324; cf. CPM p.228*

Another text relates the story of the saviour coming to earth with the "Jordan", the Living Water of the Word, which brings enlightenment to souls trapped in the darkness of materiality:

> With the Jordan they sent me to earth
> to spread truth in the world,...
> to enlighten darkened hearts....
> I illumined and transformed it completely.
> *Mandaean Prayer Book 352, CPM p.243*

See also: **bodhi**, **illumination**, **light** (8.2), **nirvāṇa**.

1. *Manichaean Psalm Book; cf. MPB* p.166.

epiphany An unexpected or sudden moment of great revelation, intuitively or directly related to a glimpse of a supernatural or divine reality; from the Greek *epiphaneia* (an appearing); a moment or short period of heightened consciousness, in which the nature of Reality becomes clearer by a direct or inner perception, frequently one in which normal thinking processes are temporarily suspended; a personal experience of the Divine, often, but not necessarily, of the divine immanence or divine presence; summarized and hinted at, to some extent, by William Blake's well-known saying, "If the doors of perception were cleansed, then everything would appear as it is, infinite."[1]

Spiritual or mystical epiphanies have come in many forms and to such a wide variety of people that it is not possible to generalize, other than to say that they carry with them a sense of their own validity, and that they are often life-changing in impact. The result is often a deep and long-lasting conversion from one way of being to another. In many instances, the realization may have been pressing upon the conscious mind for some time before the floodgates are broken down in a seemingly unheralded revelation. Paul's experience on the road to Damascus is a well-known example of a life-changing experience that came when least expected.

But how do such experiences arise? Human beings, in essence, are spiritual beings who – in most instances – have lost awareness of that reality. God is in everything. He is all-pervading, within and without. He is the ocean of

spirit within which all beings "live, and move, and have their being".[2] But when the mind is weighed down by thoughts and emotions associated with material living, the essential, inner spirit gets forgotten. An epiphany occurs when this spiritual consciousness breaks through the cloud of material thoughts and emotions, and shines into a person's mind, bringing with it a new understanding and perspective. Or put another way, an epiphany is when the veil is pulled back and the person experiences something of the universal, all-pervading, divine presence that is always there.

The following accounts come from a variety of sources and need no individual introductions:

> All that is sweet, delightful and amiable in this world, in the serenity of the air, the fineness of seasons, the joy of light, the melody of sounds, the beauty of colours, the fragrancy of smell, the splendour of precious stones, is nothing else but heaven breaking through the veil of this world, manifesting itself in such a degree and darting forth, in such variety, so much of its own nature.
>
> *William Law, An Appeal to all that Doubt, SWWL p.44*

> Our hearts were drunk with a beauty
> Our eyes could never see.
>
> *George William Russell, The Unknown God, CPAE p.5*

> I still remember walking down the Notting Hill main road and observing the (extremely sordid) landscape with joy and astonishment. Even the movement of the traffic had something universal and sublime in it.
>
> *Evelyn Underhill, in Life of Evelyn Underhill, LEUC p.28*

> It was like entering into another world, a new state of existence. Natural objects were glorified. My spiritual vision was so clarified that I saw beauty in every material object in the universe. The woods were vocal with heavenly music.
>
> *Anon., in Psychology of Religion, PRES p.120*

> When I went in the morning into the fields to work, the glory of God appeared in all His visible creation. I well remember we reaped oats, and how every straw and head of the oats seemed, as it were, arrayed in a kind of rainbow glory, or to glow, if I may so express it, in the glory of God.
>
> *Mr Peek, in Varieties of Religious Experience, VREJ p.248*

> It is only in exceptional moods that we realize how wonderful are the commonest experiences of life. It seems to me sometimes that these

experiences have an inner side, as well as the outer side we normally perceive. At such moments one suddenly sees everything with new eyes; one feels on the brink of some great revelation. It is as if we caught a glimpse of some incredibly beautiful world that lies silently about us all the time. I remember vividly my first experience of the kind when, as a boy, I came suddenly upon the quiet miracle of an ivy-clad wall, glistening under a London street lamp. I wanted to weep and I wanted to pray; to weep for the paradise from which I had been exiled, and to pray that I might yet be made worthy of it. Such moments are rare, in my experience. But their influence is permanent.

J.W.N. Sullivan, But for the Grace of God, BFGG pp.133–34

How shall I find the words to describe to you, my dear Timothy, what I felt in my year of wonder, 1942? I had a heightened perception of everything, and everything was perceived as beautiful and good. But it was more than a perception; it was a meeting, for which I had gone out to the Other and for which the Other had gone out to me: a meeting with everything's self, which at the same time was my self. . . .

With the greenness, the freshness, the slenderness, the littleness, the gentleness, the strength, the taperingness, the sun-acceptingness, the daisy-and-buttercup-enclosingness of the benign and far-stretching grass. With the trees in their various species, and with every branch and every twig and every leaf of them. With stones and mould and air and sun and a deckchair in the garden and a car down the lane and a spire on the downs and the wall of our house as I come in for lunch at one. And with people. I would sit, going up to London, in a crowded railway compartment, and know myself as in every one of my fellow travellers, and know every one of them as in me.

I was in the Royal Automobile Club, of all places, on an afternoon that summer, and my eye happened to fall on a door. It was quite an ordinary door, insofar as any single thing in the universe is ordinary, with small panels and big panels and a knob; but I tell you that this door, and the look and the sound and the life of it, filled me with joy inexpressible.

Victor Gollancz, My Dear Timothy, MDTA pp.25–26

I went out one afternoon for a walk alone. I was in the empty unthinking state in which one saunters along country lanes, simply yielding oneself to the casual sights around which give a town-bred lad with country yearning such intense delight. Suddenly I became conscious of the presence of something else. I cannot describe it, but I felt that I had direct perception of the being of God all round about me. . . .

It was an immediate act of spiritual apprehension. It came unsought, absolutely unexpectedly. I remember the wonderful transfiguration of the far-off woods and hills as they seemed to blend in the infinite Being with which I was thus brought into relation. This experience did not last long. But it sufficed to change all my feeling. I had not found God because I had never looked for him. But He had found me.

Joseph Estlin Carpenter, in JECM pp.9–10

I was no longer young: in fact I was well over sixty. The winter had been dark and tedious. For some reason or other I had not been able to read much, and I began to think there were signs of the coming end. Suddenly, with hardly any warning, spring burst upon us. Day after day we had clear, warm sunshine which deepened every contrast of colour, and at intervals we were blessed with refreshing rains. I spent most of my time out of doors on the edge of a favourite wood. All my life I had been a lover of the country, and had believed, if this is the right word, that the same thought, spirit, life, God, which was in everything I beheld, was also in me. But my creed had been taken over from books; it was accepted as an intellectual proposition. Most of us are satisfied with this kind of belief, and even call it religion. We are more content the more defined the object becomes, no matter whether or not it is in any intimate relationship with us, and we do not see that the moment God can be named he ceases to be God.

One morning when I was in the wood something happened which was nothing less than a transformation of myself and the world, although I 'believed' nothing new. I was looking at a great, spreading, bursting oak. The first tinge from the greenish-yellow buds was just visible. It seemed to be no longer a tree away from me and apart from me. The enclosing barriers of consciousness were removed and the text came into my mind, "Thou in me and I in Thee."[3] The distinction of self and not-self was an illusion. I could feel the rising sap; in me also sprang the fountain of life uprushing from its roots, and the joy of its outbreak at the extremity of each twig right up to the summit was my own: that which kept me apart was nothing. I do not argue; I cannot explain; it will be easy to prove me absurd, but nothing can shake me. "Thou in me and I in Thee." Death! What is death? There is no death: "in Thee" it is impossible, absurd.

Mark Rutherford, An Epoch, MPJR p.86

The day before he died Rabbi Shneur Salomon asked his grandson, "Do you see the ceiling?" When the boy remained silent, the Rabbi continued, in a voice quivering with joy, "I can see no ceiling or walls:

I can only see the life of everything, and God creating everything and making everything live."

Hasidic Tradition; cf. in LHHH p.63

It was my first glimpse of those activities of the human spirit which are, I am convinced, the justification of life, and in which the meaning of life is to be found. Nothing that I had hitherto experienced belonged to that region. I experienced, quite literally, a revelation.

J.W.N. Sullivan, But for the Grace of God, BFGG p.62

The outer world, with all its phenomena, is filled with divine splendour, but we must have experienced the Divine within ourselves, before we can hope to discover it in our environment.

Rudolf Steiner, Knowledge of the Higher Worlds, KHWA p.15

The beauty of nature is a distinct revelation made to the human mind, apart from that of its use.... When the materialist has exhausted himself in efforts to explain utility in nature, it would appear to be the peculiar office of beauty to rise up suddenly as a confounding and baffling *extra,* which was not even formally provided for in his scheme.

James B. Mozley, Sermons, SPUO pp.124–26

There came upon me this thought, which doubtless has occurred to many another besides myself – why the scene should so influence me and yet make no impression on the men about me. Here were men with far keener eyesight than my own, and around me were animals with eyesight keener still.... Clearly it is not the eye, but the soul that sees. But then comes the still further reflection: what may there not be staring me straight in the face which I am as blind to as the Kashmir stags are to the beauties amidst which they spend their entire lives? The whole panorama may be vibrating with beauties man has not yet the soul to see. Some already living, no doubt, see beauties that we ordinary men cannot appreciate.

Sir Francis Younghusband, Kashmir, KFEY pp.15–16

It was one of those gloriously lovely days that one sometimes sees in early summer in England – a cloudless vividly blue sky with brilliant sunshine. It was morning. The air was shimmering with the moisture from the evaporating dew. I was walking on the lawn looking at the masses of flowers in the herbaceous border. As a gardener, I was interested in what was coming up into flower; as an artist, was enjoying the combination of colour, light, and shade.

Suddenly, as I paused in contemplation, I was 'lifted' into another world (plane or dimension?). I did not seem to be inside myself though I was still looking normally at the flower border. Everything also had become transparent. But what was so amazing was the fact that I was not only seeing the colours – I was hearing the colours! Every colour was an indescribably exquisite musical sound, the whole making a harmony that no instruments could produce.

I do not know how long this illumination lasted, perhaps not more than a second or two, but as I came back to earth, so to speak, I knew that I had been in Reality. The memory of it has remained vivid and real ever since, and has brought me the greatest happiness and understanding. Now I know. I am truly thankful for this gift of knowledge.

M.I.D., in Watcher on the Hills, WHME pp.60–61

At one time I had been working exclusively at home for weeks, when suddenly I discovered, one day on a walk near Berne, how really extraordinarily beautiful nature is. I tried to hold on to this feeling. To this day I always make studies out of doors without direct sketching (the eye itself makes the sketch), and there are places that influence me profoundly. . . .

When the demand arises, lead your pupils to nature, into nature. Let them experience how a bud forms, how a tree grows, how a butterfly opens its wings, so that they may become as rich, as mobile, as wilful as nature. Contemplation is revelation; contemplation is insight into God's workshop. There, in the lap of nature, lies the secret of creation.

Paul Klee, Aus der Malklasse von Paul Klee, MPKP p.44, in KNLS pp.26–28

I was sitting on the seashore, half-listening to a friend. . . . Unconsciously to myself, I looked at a film of sand I had picked up on my hand; instead of being dull, I saw that each particle was made up on a perfect geometrical pattern, with sharp angles, from each of which a brilliant shaft of light was reflected, while each tiny crystal shone like a rainbow. The rays crossed and recrossed, making exquisite patterns of such beauty that they left me breathless.

I was used, at odd intervals, to seeing the invisible counterpart of minute objects, but this was quite unexpected and fascinating. Then, suddenly, my consciousness was lighted up from within and I saw in a vivid way how the whole universe was made up of particles of materials which, no matter how dull and lifeless they might seem at first sight, were nevertheless filled with this intense and vital beauty.

For a second or two, the whole world appeared as a blaze of glory. When it died down, it left me something I have never forgotten and

which constantly reminds me of the beauty locked up in every minute speck of material around me.

Anon., in The Psychic Sense, PSPB p.202

I must have been between five and six when this experience happened to me. It was a summer morning, and the child I was had walked through the orchard alone and come out on the brow of a sloping hill where there was grass and a wind blowing and one tall tree reaching into infinite immensities of blueness. Quite suddenly, after a moment of quietness there, earth and sky and tree and wind-blown grass and the child in the midst of them came alive together with a pulsing light of consciousness. There was a wild foxglove at the child's feet and a bee dozing about it, and to this day I can recall the swift inclusive awareness of each for the whole – I in them and they in me and all of us enclosed in a warm lucent bubble of livingness. I remember the child looking everywhere for the source of this happy wonder, and at last she questioned – "God?" – because it was the only awesome word she knew. Deep inside, like the murmurous swinging of a bell, she heard the answer, "God, God. . . ."

How long this ineffable moment lasted I never knew. It broke like a bubble at the sudden singing of a bird, and the wind blew and the world was the same as ever – only never quite the same. The experience so initiated has been the one abiding reality of my life, unalterable except in the abounding fullness and frequency of its occurrence.

Anon., in Experiences Facing Death, EFDA p.24

I was waiting for the train in a small waiting room of the railway station. About fifteen or twenty other people were gathered there for the same purpose, all total strangers to me. Some were sitting reading newspapers or talking, and others stood huddling about a stove in the corner of the room. There was the usual subdued chatter of voices with occasional laughter. It was a familiar, rather a commonplace scene.

Suddenly, I was aware of some mysterious current of force, subtle, yet of unimagined potency, which seemed to sweep through that small drab waiting room. A kind of glory descended upon the gathered company – or so it seemed to me. I looked at the faces of those around me and they seemed to be suffused with an inner radiance. I experienced in that moment a sense of profoundest kinship with each and every person there. I loved them all – but with a kind of love I had never felt before. It was an all-embracing emotion, which bound us together indissolubly in a deep unity of being. I lost all sense of personal identity then. These people were no longer strangers to me. I knew them all. We were no longer separate individuals, each

enclosed in his own private world, divided by all the barriers of social conventions and personal exclusiveness. We were one with each other and with the Life which we all lived in common. I think in this moment I understood for the first time the meaning of those words 'the mystic brotherhood'.

M.W., in Watcher on the Hills, WHME p.84

I was dazed but at the same time thrilled with the ecstasy of it. It was a "joy unspeakable and full of glory". I seemed to be walking on air; the whole world was changed; everything was brighter than it had been before, even on that bright morning, and was alive with a deep, calm, radiant, and joyful life. I was filled with happiness and peace, and knew intuitively that I had found the reality for which I had sought. . . . I was amazed too at my understanding of things. It seemed as if my mind had but to present a matter to my consciousness for it to be understood fully and completely.

After I had diarised my rough notes of the experience I worked at a lecture which I was due to deliver that evening. I was amazed at the wider understanding that had so strangely come to me, but I did not realize until quite long afterwards how completely my outlook on life, and in fact my whole scheme of things had been changed. Nor did I foresee that I would speak for years afterwards on the understanding that came to me in that brief hour's meditation.

Anon., in Recorded Illuminates, RIWH pp.58–59

Where the Sadar Street ends, trees in the garden of Free School Street are visible. One morning, I was standing in the veranda, looking at them. The sun was slowly rising above the screen of their leaves; and as I was watching it, suddenly, in a moment, a veil seemed to be lifted from my eyes. I found the world wrapt in an inexpressible glory with its waves of joy and beauty bursting and breaking on all sides. The thick shroud of sorrow that lay on my heart in many folds was pierced through and through by the light of the world, which was everywhere radiant.

That very day the poem known as *The Fountain Awakened from its Dream* flowed on like a fountain itself. When it was finished, still the curtain did not fall on that strange vision of beauty and joy. There was nothing and no one whom I did not love at that moment. . . .

I stood on the veranda and watched the coolies as they tramped down the road. Their movements, their forms, their countenances seemed to be strangely wonderful to me, as if they were all moving like waves in the great ocean of the world. When one young man placed his hand upon the shoulder of another and passed laughingly by, it was a

remarkable event to me.... I seemed to witness, in the wholeness of my vision, the movements of the body of all humanity, and to feel the beat of the music and the rhythm of a mystic dance.

Rabindranath Tagore, Letters to a Friend, LFRT p.25

There came upon him a sense of exultation, of immense joyousness, accompanied or immediately followed by an intellectual illumination quite impossible to describe. Into his brain streamed one momentary lightning flash of the brahmic splendour (splendour of *Brahman,* S. Reality) which has ever since lightened his life; upon his head fell one drop of brahmic bliss, leaving thenceforward for always an after-taste of heaven....

Like a flash there is presented to his consciousness a clear conception in outline of the meaning and drift of the universe. He does not come to believe merely; but he sees and knows that the cosmos, which to the self-conscious mind seems made up of dead matter, is in fact far otherwise – is in very truth a living presence....

He sees that the life which is in man is eternal, as all life is eternal; that the soul of man is immortal, as God is; that the universe is so built and ordered that without any peradventure all things work together for the good of each and all; that the foundation principle of the world is what we call love....

He claims that he learned more within the few seconds during which the illumination lasted than in previous months or even years of study, and that he learned much that no study could ever have taught.... Its effect proved ineffaceable; it was impossible for him ever to forget what at that time he saw and knew; neither did he, nor could he, ever doubt the truth of what was then presented to his mind.

R.M. Bucke, Cosmic Consciousness, CCEM p.311

I was reading the words telling of the ever-present and all-pervading quality of *Brahman,* when suddenly my whole being was seized by an acute state of awareness, and immediately the words assumed a great significance. I knew somehow that they were true, that *Brahman* (at that time I suppose I translated it as God) was all about me, and through me, and in me. The knowledge did not come from without, unmistakably it came from within. The state was one of extraordinary joy; I realized happiness was within me. (I believe I also felt that I controlled great power, so that I could have stopped the train just by willing it, but in writing of this afterwards as I do, I cannot be certain of this.) I can remember looking out at the countryside passing by, and everything, the trees, meadows and hedges, were all part of me,

and I of them, and all were in a great unity through which was God. Everything was a whole.

The experience lasted a few minutes, and very gradually it ebbed away. But I knew with completely unshakable conviction that I had been in touch with Reality in those few minutes.

Anon., in Watcher on the Hills, WHME p.24

Everything seems to be full of God's reflex, if we could but see it. Oh! How I have prayed to have the mystery unfolded, at least hereafter: to see, if but for a moment, the whole harmony of the great system.

Charles Kingsley, Letters, LML1 p.77

It was as though I had suddenly pushed up through the mists into a clear beautiful atmosphere. I neither saw nor heard. I just felt an indescribable ecstasy as I was suddenly conscious of an overwhelming love which seemed to encompass all that was and is and will be. It was all-encompassing and personal at the same time and lifted me to superb heights. I can remember feeling exultantly "This is God," and God, after all, was both personal and immense. I wish I had at my command the words which would truly convey the power, the depth, the infinity, the gentleness, the serenity and the intimacy which intermingled then. Somehow one doesn't separate the qualities which were evident. One just wants to enjoy the oneness of it all.

Mrs L., in Watcher on the Hills, WHME pp.23–24

I remember now (and I am always recalling it) the greatest experience in my life, that vital moment when I was baptized by the Holy Spirit within. For one perfect second, unexpected, unheralded, and while I was doing a trivial task, my personal mind and body were fused in light: a breathless unbearable light-perfection, as intense as the explosion of a flash of lightning within me.… In this timeless second, I knew a love, knowledge and ecstasy transcending anything I could understand or describe. I was lifted into the midst of God, in whom all people, all worlds, and every created life or thing moved and had their being. Perfection! Had I been suffering from the worst mental or physical disease known to man, in that light I should instantly have been made whole.

In that moment, I knew my Lord dwells within my own being, and within everyone else. In that one moment, I knew the truth of His eternal reality, and that He is all, that my Father and I are one, that all people and the Father are one, and that we are all one with each other in spirit.

Brother Mandus, This Wondrous Way of Life, in WHME p.52

> I was thirty-five at the time of the experience. It happened thus: on April 13th 1905 at eight a.m. I was standing among pine trees looking out at the sky when suddenly the heavens opened, as it were, and caught me up. I was swept up and out of myself altogether into a flood of white glory. I had no sense of time or place. The ecstasy was terrific while it lasted. It could have lasted only a minute or two. It went as suddenly as it came. I found myself bathed with tears, but they were tears of joy. I felt one with everything and everybody; and somehow I knew that what I had experienced was Reality and that Reality is perfection.
>
> *B.E.B., in Watcher on the Hills, WHME p.53*

> In the train, I had one of those curious musical visions, which only very rarely visit me. I hear strange and very beautiful chords, generally full, slow and grand, succeeding each other in most interesting sequences. I do not invent them, I could not; they pass before my mind, and I only listen. Now and then my will seems aroused when I see ahead how some fine resolution might follow, and I seem to will that certain chords should come, and then they do come; but then my will seems suspended again, and they go on quite independently. It is so interesting, the chords seem to fold over each other and die away down into music of infinite softness, and then they unfold and open out, as if great curtains were being withdrawn one after another, widening the view, till, with a gathering power and intensity and fullness, it seems as if the very skies were being opened out before one, and a sort of great blaze and glory of music, such as my outward ears never heard, gradually swells out in perfectly sublime splendour.
>
> This time there was an added feature: I seemed to hear depths and heights of sound beyond the scale which human ears can receive – keen, far-up octaves, like vividly twinkling starlight of music, and mighty, slow vibrations of gigantic strings going down into grand thunders of depths, octaves below anything otherwise appreciable as musical notes. Then, all at once, it seemed as if my soul had got a new sense, and I could see this inner music as well as hear it; and then it was like gazing down into marvellous abysses of sound, and up into dazzling regions of what, to the eye, would have been light and colour, but to this new sense was sound. Wasn't it odd! It lasted perhaps half an hour, but I don't know exactly, and it is very difficult to describe in words.
>
> *Frances Ridley Havergal, Memorials, MFRH pp.151–52*

It seems clear that the majority of these experiences have either come upon the individuals suddenly or they are the highlights of a more continuous, exalted

understanding. In all cases, the experiences were of profound significance and reality to those concerned, something characteristic of all mystic experience.

Perhaps one of the most wonderful things to bear in mind is that they are only the "hem of His garment", as Joseph James[4] succinctly puts it. Such spiritual perception is often an experience only of the bottom rung of the ladder or dimension of being. Yet, what illumination it bestows upon the recipient regarding the nature of existence! "A veil seemed to lift from my eyes," "I was amazed at my understanding of things," "My whole being was seized by an acute state of awareness" – the same refrain is repeated again and again. For a brief period, the divine immanence becomes almost tangible.

It is remarkable that these life-changing experiences have happened to 'ordinary' people, young and old, in the course of their everyday life. Most of the accounts are of preliminary experiences on the threshold of the inner realms. They are experiences of expanded consciousness in which the soul remains within the confines of the body and of the material world. The soul is rarely described as leaving the body, becoming utterly unconscious of the physical universe, as it would were it to rise up even to just the subastral worlds.

Joy and bliss automatically come through inner mental concentration, within. Even in the early stages, overwhelming experiences of inner bliss, beauty, love and understanding will occasionally come upon a person. Yet the journey has hardly begun. The higher heavenly worlds have yet to be traversed. These regions are intensely beautiful in comparison to the physical domain. The souls in those blissful realms are constantly in a state of beatitude and joy, working in conscious harmony with the divine purpose, always aware that they are spiritual beings dwelling in the presence of the Divine.

In all of God's vast creation, it is only in this world that darkness, unhappiness, and deep ignorance prevail. In the astral and higher realms, the souls are aware of the presence of God in all things. They know that they are swimming in it, like fish in water. It is understandable, then, that human beings are overjoyed by any experience that demonstrates the existence of the higher reality, and that they may mistake such experiences as visions of the highest Reality when in truth they may be only faint echoes of the waves breaking upon the shores of the Great Immensity.

See also: **conversion** (▸4), **presence of God**.

1. William Blake, *Marriage of Heaven and Hell* 22, *MHHB* p.xxii.
2. *Acts* 17:28.
3. *John* 17:21, *KJV.*
4. Joseph James, *Way of Mysticism, WMJJ* p.72*ff.*

eternal now, **eternal present**, **holy now** The present moment, infused with a sense of divine immanence or presence; an awareness that one's personal sense of being is enfolded in the being of the Divine, and exists in an eternity to be found right-here-now, in the present moment; the eternity in which all of time is simultaneously present; expressions almost invariably associated with a perception of the divine Eternity.

The 'eternal now' and other expressions conveying a similar understanding have a considerable history. In Plato's *Parmenidēs,* the protagonists discuss with Socratēs how the One gives rise to the many. As a part of this discussion, they wonder how it is that a thing can pass from rest to motion, and from motion to rest. For although there cannot be a time in which a thing is neither in motion nor at rest, yet it is clear that the change from one to the other must be taking place. Is there, asks Parmenidēs of Socratēs, such a point in time in which this change in state (and by extension, all change) happens? Socratēs replies that there is, and that it is called

> 'the moment *(exaiphnēs)*'. For the moment *(exaiphnēs)* seems to imply a something out of which change takes place into either of two states; for the change is not from the state of rest as such, nor from the state of motion as such; but there is this curious state, which we call 'the moment *(exaiphnēs)*' lying between rest and motion, not being in any time; and into this and out of this what is in motion changes into rest, and what is at rest into motion.
>
> *Plato, Parmenidēs 156d–e, DP2 p.706*

Socratēs goes on to explain how an understanding of the *exaiphnēs* makes it possible to comprehend how the One can be simultaneously transcendent and omnipresent. Using a similar expression, he describes how the "now" or the "present" is inseparable from the One:

> But the present *(nyn)* is always inseparable from the One throughout its entire being; for whenever it is, it is always now *(nyn).*
>
> *Plato, Parmenidēs 152e; cf. DP2 p.701, PCPG pp.284–87*

In a similar vein, the third-century mystic Plotinus speaks of contemplation upon the eternal nature of the divine Intelligence *(Nous),* the "hearth of Reality" from which all things come into being. See, he says, how everything arises from an "eternal present";

> We are in the presence of the pure Intelligence *(Nous).* Concentrate upon it fixedly, but not with the eyes of the body. You are now contemplating the hearth of Reality, within it a sleepless light. Do you see how It holds to Itself, and how It separates things that were together?

> How It lives a life that endures, and keeps a thought directed, not upon any future, but upon that which already is, upon an eternal present?
>
> *Plotinus, Enneads 6:2.8; cf. PAC2 p.46, PEC p.272*

St Augustine, much influenced by the teachings of Plotinus, also says that God dwells in an eternal present, an eternity beyond time, an eternal moment within which all things exist:

> It is not with God as it is with us. He does not look ahead to the future, look directly at the present, look back to the past. He sees in some other manner, utterly remote from anything we experience or could imagine. He does not see things by turning His attention from one thing to another. He sees all without any kind of change. Things which happen under the condition of time are in the future, not yet in being, or in the present, already existing, or in the past, no longer in being. But God comprehends all these in a stable and eternal present. And with Him there is no difference between seeing with the eyes and 'seeing' with the mind, for He does not consist of mind and body. Nor is there any difference between His present, past, and future knowledge. His knowledge is not like ours, which has three tenses: present, past, and future. God's knowledge has no change or variation; nor does His attention pass from one thought to another. All things which He knows are present at the same time to His incorporeal vision. He knows events in time without any temporal acts of knowledge, just as He moves events in time, without any temporal motions in Himself.
>
> *St Augustine, City of God 11:21, CGAP p.452*

Indicating the connection between time and inner being, St Augustine also points out that if a man could only learn to hold his mind still, he would gain some understanding of eternity:

> In eternity, nothing moves into the past: all is present. Time, on the other hand, is never all present at once. The past is always driven on by the future, the future always follows on the heels of the past, and both the past and the future have their beginning and their end in the eternal present. If only men's minds could be seized and held still! They would see how eternity, in which there is neither past nor future, determines both past and future time.
>
> *St Augustine, Confessions 11:11, CA pp.261–62*

Many centuries later, the German mystic Meister Eckhart (*c.*1260–1327) expands on this insight. God, he says, is continually generating His creation in the eternity of the now, and He does so by means of His Son, the divine Word:

> God is ever at work in the eternal now, and His work is the begetting of His Son: He is bringing him forth all the time. In his birth, all things have proceeded forth, and so great is God's pleasure in this birth that He spends His whole energy upon it.... God gives Himself birth all at once in His Son: God speaks all things in His Son.
>
> *Meister Eckhart, Sermons 79, STE2 p.230*

And likewise, possibly referring to St Augustine:

> I was reading recently in a book[1] – who can fully understand it? – that God is now making the world just as on the first day, when He created the world.
>
> *Meister Eckhart, Sermons 29, STE1 p.216*

In God, all temporal 'nows' are contained in His single and eternal now:

> The now in which God made the world is as close to this time as the now in which I am just speaking, and the last day is as close to this now as the day that was yesterday.
>
> *Meister Eckhart, Sermons 67, STE2 p.150*

> The now in which God made the first man, and the now in which the last man shall cease to be, and the now I speak in, all are the same in God, and there is but one now.
>
> *Meister Eckhart, Sermons 8, STE1 p.74*

Man lives in time, but were he to rise above it, he would dwell in Eternity, which encompasses all of time:

> Man knows in the now of time. The now of time is the least thing there is. But take away the now of time, and you are everywhere and have the whole of time.
>
> *Meister Eckhart, Sermons 49, STE2 p.37*

To receive the eternal gift of God, man must free himself of time, and everything he has done in time:

> To be receptive to the highest Truth, and to live therein, a man must needs be without before and after, untrammelled by all his acts or by any images he ever perceived, empty and free, receiving the divine gift in the eternal now, and bearing it back unhindered in the light of the same with praise and thanksgiving in our Lord Jesus Christ.
>
> *Meister Eckhart, Sermons 6, STE1 p.58*

Then the soul will receive everything that God is, in the eternity of now:

> The soul receives everything that He is. Whatever the soul desires is now ready. Whatever God gives has been eternally becoming: its becoming is now new and fresh and altogether in one eternal now.
>
> *Meister Eckhart, Sermons 32, STE1 p.238*

Eckhart lived during the time of the Inquisition, and his somewhat abstruse metaphysics resulted, towards the end of his life, in a charge of heresy, on multiple counts. Since, for example, he saw all things temporal from the standpoint of an Eternity in which there is no past or future, he could not readily agree that the creation had its origin at a certain point in time.

Likewise, his doctrine of the "Son", the mystical or cosmic Christ, being eternally born anew, outside of time, seems at variance with the dogma of the physical incarnation of Jesus Christ at a particular point in time. But Eckhart was speaking of something different. In his view, the mystical Christ could be born into the soul of any person, at any time,[2] for, "Your human nature and his are not different; it is one nature, for what is in Christ, that is in you."[3]

Eckhart's metaphysics influenced and were echoed by other mystics of the time, notably the Flemish Jan van Ruysbroek,[4] Johann Tauler,[5] and others. But metaphysics aside, the primary concern in the search for the contemplative or mystical life is personal experience. How is it possible to develop an awareness of the eternal now? The answer is by means of interior prayer, of which there are many variants on the primary theme of stilling the mind, of bringing its multiplicity back to unity. Kallistos Ware extols the virtues of the Jesus prayer, used by the Orthodox Church to focus the mind in the presence of God:

> What is to be done? How shall we learn to live in the present, in the eternal now? How can we seize the *kairos,* the decisive moment, the moment of opportunity? It is precisely over this that the Jesus prayer can help. The repeated invocation of the Name can bring us, by God's grace, from dividedness to unity, from dispersion and multiplicity to singleness. "To stop the continual jostling of your thoughts," says Bishop Theophan, "you must bind the mind with one thought, or the thought of One only."[6]
>
> *Kallistos Ware, Power of the Name, PNW pp.23–24*

Thérèse of Lisieux summarizes the matter simply, as befits the subject:

> If I did not simply live from one moment to the next, it would be impossible for me to keep my patience. I can see only the present, I forget the past, and I take good care not to think about the future. We

> get discouraged and feel despair because we brood about the past and the future.... It is such folly to pass one's time fretting, instead of resting quietly on the heart of Jesus.
>
> *Thérèse of Lisieux, Story of a Soul, Epilogue, Counsels; cf. TLSS pp.203, 228*

Jean-Pierre de Caussade expresses his experience:

> The present moment holds infinite riches beyond your wildest dreams.
>
> *J.-P. de Caussade, Abandonment to Divine Providence 9, SPM p.82*

One of the most compelling writers of recent times to build his spiritual life around the sacred presence of the Divine in the eternal now was the twentieth-century Quaker, Thomas Kelly (1893–1941). For Kelly, the eternal now is a place in which to dwell, simultaneously conscious of the presence of God:

> Time spreads itself out like a ribbon, stretching away from the now into the past, and forward from the now into the future, at the far end of which stands the New Jerusalem. In this ribbon of time, we live, anxiously surveying the past in order to learn how to manage the most important part of the ribbon, the future. The now is merely an incidental dividing point, unstable, non-important, except as by its unstaying migration we move ahead into the richer meadows and the greener pastures of the future. This, I fear, is the all-too-familiar world of all-too-many religious men and women, when a deeper and a richer experience is possible....
>
> In the immediate experience of the presence, the now is no mere nodal point between the past and the future. It is the seat and region of the divine presence itself.
>
> No longer is the ribbon spread out with equal vividness before one, for the past matters less and the future matters less, for the now contains all that is needed for the absolute satisfaction of our deepest cravings. Why want, and yearn, and struggle, when the now contains all one could ever wish for, and more? The present now is not something from which we hurriedly escape, toward what is hoped will be a better future.
>
> Instead of anxiety lest the future never yield all we have hoped, lest we fail to contribute our full stint before the shadows of the evening fall upon our lives, we only breathe a quiet prayer to the now and say, "Stay, thou art so sweet." Instead of anxiety lest our past, our past defects, our long-standing deficiencies blight our well-intentioned future efforts, all our past sense of weakness falls away and we stand erect, in this holy now, joyous, serene, assured, unafraid.
>
> Between the relinquished past and the untrodden future stands this holy now, whose bulk has swelled to cosmic size, for within the now is the dwelling place of God Himself. In the now, we are at home at

last. The fretful winds of time are stilled, the nostalgic longings of this heaven-born earth-traveller come to rest. For the one-dimensional ribbon of time has loosed its hold. It has by no means disappeared. We live within time, within the one-dimensional ribbon. But every time-now is found to be a continuance of an eternal now, and in the eternal now receives a new evaluation. We have not merely rediscovered time; we have found, in this holy immediacy of the now, the root and source of time itself. For it is the Eternal who is the mother of our holy now, nay, is our now, and time is, as Plato said, merely its moving image. . . .

An invariable element in the experience of now is that of unspeakable and exquisite joy, peace, serene release. A new song is put into our mouths. No old song ever has caught the glory and the gladness of this now; no former now can be drawn upon to give perfect voice to this now. The wellsprings of life are bubbling up anew each moment. . . .

For the holy now is not something which we, by our activity, by our dynamic energy, overtake or come upon. It is a now which itself is dynamic, which lays hold actively upon us, which breaks in actively upon us and re-energizes us from within a new centre. . . .

And then comes the sense of Presence. The eternal now breaks through the time-nows, and all is secure. A sense of absolute security and assurance of being linked with an overcoming Power replaces the old anxieties. . . .

An immediate corollary to this is the weakening of the merely calculated, rationally planned decisions. When we lived in the one-dimensional time-ribbon we had to think life out all by ourselves. The past had to be read cautiously, the future had to be planned with care. . . . But then comes the reality of the presence, and the now-eternal is found to underlie and generate all time-temporals. And a life of amazing, victorious faith-living sets in. . . .

Thus in faith we go forward, with breathtaking boldness, and in faith we stand still, unshaken, with amazing confidence. For the time-nows are rooted in the eternal now, which is a steadfast presence, an infinite ocean of light and love which is flowing over the ocean of darkness and death.

Thomas Kelly, Testament of Devotion, TDK pp.69–74, 77–78, 80

Richard Jefferies (1848–1887) adopts an entirely experiential attitude to the eternal now. Since many of his experiences were associated with a mystical perception of the countryside around him, Jeffries is sometimes categorized as a ‘nature mystic’:

My heart was dusty, parched for want of the rain of deep feeling; my mind arid and dry, for there is a dust which settles on the heart as well

as that which falls on a ledge.... When this began to form I felt eager to escape from it, to throw it off like a heavy clothing, to drink deeply once more at the fresh fountains of life.... There was a hill to which I used to resort at such periods. The labour of walking three miles to it, all the while gradually ascending, seemed to clear my blood of the heaviness accumulated at home....

Moving up the sweet short turf, at every step my heart seemed to obtain a wider horizon of feeling; with every inhalation of rich pure air, a deeper desire. The very light of the sun was whiter and more brilliant here. By the time I had reached the summit I had entirely forgotten the petty circumstances and the annoyances of existence. I felt myself, myself....

I was utterly alone with the sun and the earth. Lying down on the grass, I spoke in my soul to the earth, the sun, the air, and the distant sea far beyond sight. I thought of the earth's firmness – I felt it bear me up; through the grassy couch there came an influence as if I could feel the great earth speaking to me. I thought of the wandering air – its pureness, which is its beauty; the air touched me and gave me something of itself. I spoke to the sea: though so far, in my mind I saw it, green at the rim of the earth and blue in deeper ocean; I desired to have its strength, its mystery and glory. Then I addressed the sun, desiring the soul equivalent of his light and brilliance, his endurance and unwearied race. I turned to the blue heaven over, gazing into its depth, inhaling its exquisite colour and sweetness. The rich blue of the unattainable flower of the sky drew my soul towards it, and there it rested, for pure colour is rest of heart.

By all these I prayed; I felt an emotion of the soul beyond all definition; prayer is a puny thing to it, and the word is a rude sign to the feeling, but I know no other. By the blue heaven, by the rolling sun bursting through untrodden space, a new ocean of ether every day unveiled; by the fresh and wandering air encompassing the world; by the sea sounding on the shore – the green sea, white-flecked at the margin, and the deep ocean; by the strong earth under me. Then, returning, I prayed by the sweet thyme, whose little flowers I touched with my hand; by the slender grass; by the crumble of dry chalky earth I took up and let fall through my fingers. Touching the crumble of earth, the blade of grass, the thyme flower, breathing the earth-encircling air, thinking of the sea and the sky, holding out my hand for the sunbeams to touch it, prone on the sward in token of deep reverence, thus I prayed that I might touch to the unutterable existence....

The great sun burning with light; the strong earth, dear earth; the warm sky; the pure air; the thought of ocean; the inexpressible beauty of all filled me with a rapture, an ecstasy, an *inflatus.* With

this *inflatus,* too, I prayed. Next to myself I came and recalled myself, my bodily existence. I held out my hand, the sunlight gleamed on the skin and the iridescent nails; I recalled the mystery and beauty of the flesh. I thought of the mind with which I could see the ocean sixty miles distant, and gather to myself its glory. I thought of my inner existence, that consciousness which is called the soul.... I hid my face in the grass, I was wholly prostrated, I lost myself in the wrestle, I was rapt and carried away....

I see now that what I laboured for was soul life, more soul nature, to be exalted, to be full of soul learning....

Had any shepherd accidently seen me lying on the turf, he would only have thought I was resting a few minutes; I made no outward show....

Speaking by an inclination towards, not in words, my soul prays that I may ... have in myself the secret and meaning of the earth, the golden sun, the light, the foam-flecked sea. Let my soul become enlarged; I am not enough; I am little and contemptible. I desire a greatness of soul, an irradiance of mind, a deeper insight, a broader hope. Give me power of soul, so that I may actually effect by its will that which I strive for....

The long-lived summer days dried and warmed the turf in the meadows. I used to lie down in solitary corners at full length on my back, so as to feel the embrace of the earth. The grass stood high above me, and the shadows of the tree branches danced on my face. I looked up at the sky, with half-closed eyes to bear the dazzling light. Bees buzzed over me, sometimes a butterfly passed, there was a hum in the air, greenfinches sang in the hedge....

As the hot sands take up the heat, so would I take up that soul energy. Dreamy in appearance, I was breathing full of existence; I was aware of the grass blades, the flowers, the leaves on hawthorn and tree. I seemed to live more largely through them, as if each were a pore through which I drank. The grasshoppers called and leaped, the greenfinches sang, the blackbirds happily fluted, all the air hummed with life. I was plunged deep in existence, and with all that existence I prayed.

Through every grass blade in the thousand, thousand grasses; through the million leaves, veined and edge-cut, on bush and tree; through the song-notes and the marked feathers of the birds; through the insects' hum and the colour of the butterflies; through the soft warm air, and flecks of clouds dissolving – I used them all for prayer....

I prayed that my soul might be more than the cosmos of life. That I might have the deepest of soul life, the deepest of all, deeper far than all this greatness of the visible universe and even of the invisible; that

I might have a fullness of soul till now unknown, and utterly beyond my own conception.

In the deepest darkness of the night the same thoughts rose in my mind as in the bright light of noontide. What is there which I have not used to strengthen the same emotion? …

There was a secluded spring to which I sometimes went to drink the pure water, lifting it in the hollow of my hand. Drinking the lucid water, clear as light itself in solution, I absorbed the beauty and purity of it. I drank the thought of the element; I desired soul nature, pure and limpid. When I saw the sparkling dew on the grass – a rainbow broken into drops – it called up the same thought-prayer. The stormy wind whose sudden twists laid the trees on the ground woke the same feeling; my heart shouted with it. The soft summer air which entered when I opened my window in the morning breathed the same sweet desire. …

The sciences I studied never checked it for a moment; nor did the books of old philosophy. The sun was stronger than science; the hills more than philosophy. …

Listening to the sighing of the grass I felt immortality as I felt the beauty of the summer morning, and I thought beyond immortality, of other conditions, more beautiful than existence, higher than immortality.

Sweetly, the summer air came up to the tumulus (prehistoric burial mound), the grass sighed softly, the butterflies went by, sometimes alighting on the green dome. Two thousand years![7] Summer after summer the blue butterflies had visited the mound, the thyme had flowered, the wind sighed in the grass. The azure morning had spread its arms over the low tomb; and full-flowing noon burned on it; the purple of sunset rosied the sward. Stars, ruddy in the vapour of the southern horizon, beamed at midnight through the mystic summer night, which is dusky and yet full of light. White mists swept up and hid it; dews rested on the turf; tender harebells drooped; the wings of the finches fanned the air. … Brown autumn dwelt in the woods beneath; the rime of winter whitened the beech clump on the ridge; again the buds came on the wind-blown hawthorn bushes, and in the evening the broad constellation of Orion covered the east. Two thousand times! Two thousand times the woods grew green, and ring doves built their nests. Day and night for two thousand years – light and shadow sweeping over the mound. …

Realizing that spirit, recognizing my own inner consciousness, the psyche, so clearly, I cannot understand time. It is eternity now. I am in the midst of it. It is about me in the sunshine; I am in it, as the butterfly floats in the light-laden air. Nothing has to come: it is now.

Now is eternity; now is the immortal life. Here this moment, by this tumulus, on earth, now; I exist in it. The years, the centuries, the cycles are absolutely nothing; it is only a moment since this tumulus was raised; in a thousand years more it will still be only a moment. To the soul there is no past and no future; all is and will be ever, in now. . . .

It is eternity now, it always was eternity, and always will be. . . . I am in eternity now and must there remain. . . . The continuity of now is forever. . . . The wonder is here. . . .

I felt the presence of the immense powers of the universe; I felt out into the depths of the ether. So intensely conscious of the sun, the sky, the limitless space, I felt too in the midst of eternity then, in the midst of the supernatural, among the immortal. . . . By these I knew the supernatural to be more intensely real than the sun. I touched the supernatural, the immortal, there at that moment. . . .

Things that have been miscalled supernatural appear to me simple, more natural than nature, than earth, than sea, or sun. It is beyond telling more natural that I should have a soul than not, that there should be immortality. . . .

It is matter which is the supernatural, and difficult of understanding. Why this clod of earth I hold in my hand? Why this water which drops sparkling from my fingers dipped in the brook? Why are they at all? When? How? What for? Matter is beyond understanding, mysterious, impenetrable; I touch it easily, comprehend it, no. . . .

The supernatural miscalled, the natural in truth, is the real. To me everything is supernatural. How strange that condition of mind which cannot accept anything but the earth, the sea, the tangible universe! Without the misnamed supernatural, these to me seem incomplete, unfinished. Without soul all these are dead. . . .

As I move about in the sunshine I feel in the midst of the supernatural: in the sunshine I feel in the midst of the supernatural: in the midst of immortal things. . . .

So full am I always of a sense of the immortality now at this moment round about me that it would not surprise me in the least if a circumstance outside physical experience occurred. It would seem to me quite natural. Give the soul the power it conceives, and there would be nothing wonderful in it.

I can see nothing astonishing in what are called miracles. Only those who are mesmerized by matter can find a difficulty in such events. . . . The wonder rather is that they do not happen frequently. . . .

When I consider that I dwell this moment in the eternal now that has ever been and will be, that I am in the midst of immortal things this moment, that there probably are souls as infinitely superior to mine as mine to a piece of timber, what then, pray, is a ‘miracle’? . . .

Sometimes I have concentrated myself, and driven away by continued will all sense of outward appearances, looking straight with the full power of my mind inwards on myself. I find 'I' am there; an 'I' I do not wholly understand, or know, something is there distinct from earth and timber, from flesh and bones. Recognizing it, I feel on the margin of a life unknown, very near, almost touching it: on the verge of power which if I could grasp would give me an immense breadth of existence, an ability to execute what I now only conceive; most probably of far more than that. To see that 'I' is to know that I am surrounded with immortal things. . . .

How many words it has taken to describe so briefly the feelings and the thoughts that came to me by the tumulus. . . .

I have been obliged to write these things by an irresistible impulse which has worked in me since early youth. They have not been written for the sake of argument, still less for any thought of profit, rather indeed the reverse. They have been forced from me by earnestness of heart, and they express my most serious convictions. For seventeen years they have been lying in my mind, continually thought of and pondered over.

I was not more than eighteen when an inner and esoteric meaning began to come to me from all the visible universe, and indefinable aspirations filled me. I found them in the grassy fields, under the trees, on the hilltops, at sunrise, and in the night. There was a deeper meaning everywhere. The sun burned with it, the broad front of morning beamed with it; a deep feeling entered me while gazing at the sky in the azure noon, and in the starlit evening. I was sensitive to all things, to the earth under, the star-hollow round about; to the least blade of grass, to the largest oak. They seemed like exterior nerves and veins for the conveyance of feeling to me.

Sometimes a very ecstasy of exquisite enjoyment of the entire visible universe filled me. I was aware that in reality the feeling and the thought were in me, and not in the earth or sun; yet I was more conscious of it when in company with these.

Richard Jefferies, The Story of My Heart,
SHRJ pp.1–12, 15–16, 28–32, 61, 32–35, 141–42

See also: **awareness**, **presence of God**.

1. Probably St Augustine, *Confessions* 11:13.
2. See M. O'C. Walshe, *Introduction,* in *STE1* pp.xxxv–xxxvi.
3. Meister Eckhart, *Sermons* 92; *cf. STE2* p.314.
4. Jan van Ruysbroek, *e.g. Book of Supreme Truth* 10, *SSJR* p.241.
5. Johann Tauler, *Sermons* 13, *HLT* p.303.

6. Theophan the Recluse; *cf.* in *APOA* p.97.
7. He is referring to some warrior of ancient times who had been interred in the tumulus.

etheric projection See **astral projection**.

exaltation The state of being spiritually elevated or raised up; being filled with the joy and bliss of contact with the Divine; often used of the gods, of angels, of Jesus Christ, or God, as well as spiritually elevated souls. Though commonly resulting from spiritual practice or prayer, exaltation is generally regarded as the grace of God, since it appears spontaneously, and cannot be experienced at will. Many Christian writers and others have echoed the well-known saying of Jesus:

> Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased;
> and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.
>
> *Matthew 23:12, KJV*

The meaning generally understood is that pride comes before a fall, while a truly humble person, someone whose ego has been effaced, can be spiritually exalted by divine grace. Richard Rolle describes, from his own experience, the exalted condition of a soul who has inwardly turned away from the world:

> To the extent that a man of God finds no pleasure in outward activity, he becomes inwardly rapt in singing the sweetness of eternal love in songs of delight and unspeakable joy. Little wonder, then, if he enjoys in his mind the kind of sweetness that angels have in heaven, although to a less degree.... Truly, such a lover of Jesus Christ does not say his prayers as other men do, however righteous they may be, because his mind is raised up in great exaltation and rapt with love for Christ. He is taken out of himself into indescribable joy, and divine music floods into him.
>
> *Richard Rolle, Fire of Love 22; cf. FLML (1:22) p.98, FLRR pp.113–14*

And again:

> Truly, the thoughts of Christ's lovers rise upwards swiftly and harmoniously. They do not allow themselves to be bound to passing things or to get involved in carnal matters, but they go on and up until they reach the heavens. Sometimes when the body is tired in the service of Christ, the spirit is exalted and taken up to heavenly refreshment and

> the contemplation of God. For he who prays devoutly does not have a heart that wanders about in worldly things, but one that is raised to God in heaven.
>
> *Richard Rolle, Fire of Love 28; cf. FLML (1:28) p.121, FLRR pp.132–33*

Jan van Ruysbroek also describes such exaltation, albeit of a momentary nature:

> Sometimes, God gives to such men a brief glimpse in the spirit like lightning in heaven, so to speak. In this case, a brief glimpse of a peculiar clarity is manifest, and it shines forth from pure nakedness (of being), and so in the twinkling of an eye the spirit is exalted above itself, and then immediately the light is gone, and the man returns to himself.
>
> *Jan van Ruysbroek, Spiritual Espousals 2:11; cf. SER p.108*

Jean-Pierre de Caussade says that everyone could live in a permanent state of such exaltation if they would only entrust each moment to God:

> Your life flows unceasingly in that unknown deep where all that is necessary is to love and accept the present moment as the best, with perfect trust in God's universal goodness. Every soul could live in inconceivable and sublime exaltation if all were contented with God's purpose for them. Yes, if we could leave that divine hand to do its work, we could all attain the height of perfection.
>
> *J.-P. de Caussade, Abandonment to Divine Providence 9, SPM p.93*

And likewise:

> The path of perfect faith … leads to the discovery of God in each moment, and that is the most exalted, the most spiritual of all blessings.
>
> *J.-P. de Caussade, Abandonment to Divine Providence 11, SPM p.123*

See also: **bliss**.

falāḥ (A/P) *Lit.* welfare, success, thriving, prosperity, happiness; deliverance, liberation, salvation; in Muslim thought, to become free from the created worlds and to reach the eternal:

> In *ṣūfī* terminology, *falāḥ* denotes a wayfarer's salvation or freedom from the darkness of attachments and multiplicity.
>
> *Mir'āt-i 'Ushshāq, in TAT p.220; cf. in SSE3 p.200*

> The essence of deliverance *(falāḥ)* is the forgetting of both the worlds and instead beholding the primordial and everlasting eternity, for whoever attains union with God will never die.
>
> *Rūzbihān, Mashrab al-Arwāḥ 4:15, MARB p.72*

Maghribī says that this *falāḥ* comes from being served the intoxicating "wine" of divine love "by the cupbearer", the spiritual master:

> Whoever is given this wine by the cupbearer *(sāqī)*
> is liberated from self;
> Whoever is liberated from self
> is delivered *(falāḥ)* from both the worlds.
>
> *Maghribī, Dīvān-i Kāmil 57:554, DSMR p.113; cf. in SSE3 p.200*

See also: **moksha**.

fanā' (A), **fanā** (P) *Lit.* annihilation, passing away, extinction, obliteration, eradication; from *fānī* (perishing; thus, transitory, evanescent, perishable), as in an oft-quoted verse from the *Qur'ān:* "Everything is perishable *(fānī)* except His face *(wajh)*."[1] Spiritually, *fanā'* implies annihilation from the mystic of all that is other than God Himself. It means the extinction of individuality or ego, the passing away of selfhood or self-existence. *Fanā'* is commonly twinned with *baqā'* (abiding, subsistence; thus, eternal life), which together describe what mystics of other traditions have described as 'merging into' or 'becoming one with' the Divine. The final stage of *fanā'* implies a total passing away, annihilation, extinction, death, or obliteration of the individual identity as it merges into God. After this obliteration of the self *(fanā')* comes continued existence or subsistence *(baqā')* in God. All traces of separate identity have disappeared. In *baqā',* even though the mystic may continue to function in this and the higher worlds through the various means of expression at these levels, the only consciousness that remains is that of God in all things. The mystic has died to himself and lives in the Divine.

The significance of *fanā'* and *baqā'* in the Sufi expression of the mystic path cannot be overemphasized. The implication of describing this process by using this pair of terms (rather than a single term like 'merging' or 'becoming one with') is that the seeker must face the fear of annihilation, must persevere on past the innate resistance to 'death' before it becomes possible to arrive at the bliss and peace of *baqā'.* Rūmī says, "The whole world has taken the wrong path from fear of nonexistence, which in fact is its refuge."[2] In regard to God, the lover is annihilated. He loses all sense of existence apart from the Divine; but in fact, in that annihilation *(fanā),* he finds eternal subsistence

(baqā). He finds true existence in nonexistence. Sufis, therefore, urge the seeker onwards. Rūmī is unequivocal:

> No one will find his way into the court of Majesty
> until he is annihilated *(fanā).*
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī VI:232; cf. MJR6 p.270, SPL p.179*

Without annihilation of the self, no one can return to God:

> He alone is perfect in attribute
> who has become the prey of annihilation *(fanā).*
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 2589:27470, KSD5 p.286, in SPL p.179*

Although the term *fanā'* – particularly as *fanā' al-fanā'* (annihilation of annihilation) – is used to describe the stage of union with God, *fanā'* is also used for many other stages along the way. It is as if the mystic path were a long series of 'deaths'. Layer by layer, the mystic peels off and discards the outermost of the obstacles separating him from God, the discarding of each layer being a 'death'. Thus, throughout Sufi literature, *fanā'* is explained as a progression of stages, one 'death' leading to the next. The most common such series is: first, *fanā' fī al-shaykh,* annihilation of the self in the master *(shaykh);* second, *fanā' fī al-rasūl,* annihilation of the self in the messenger *(rasūl);* and third, *fanā' fi Allāh,* annihilation of the self in God. *Al-Rasūl* refers both to the Prophet and to the *Ḥaqīqat al-Muḥammadīyah* (Reality of Muḥammad), meaning the Reality, the creative power, that is in Muḥammad and all perfect saints, and which is the true messenger of God:

> The annihilation of self comes first by adoring another form or appearance. That annihilation never kills a person. It is *fanā fī shaykh,* and later comes *fanā fī rasūl* and *fanā fī Allāh.* These are the three steps on the path of annihilation.
> *ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK6 p.277*

The successive degrees of *fanā'* are also described as 'four stations': annihilation in God's Effects *(fanā' fī al-Āthār),* annihilation in His Acts *(fanā' fī al-Afʿāl),* annihilation in His Attributes *(fanā' fī al-Ṣifāt),* and annihilation in His Essence *(fanā' fī al-Dhāt).* These correspond to the ascending hierarchy of created worlds *('ālamīn)* that are described in early Sufi writings, the world of Effects being the lowest level, the physical universe. They also correspond to the four levels of *tawḥīd* (union). Annihilation *(fanā')* at each stage is a 'death', because each of these transitions is indeed a death. Just as physical death is the discarding of the physical body, so does each of these stages of *fanā'* entail the discarding or 'death' of those aspects of being required for

functioning in the level of existence being left behind. The true or highest 'death', however, is not death of the physical body, but death or annihilation of the self:

> Don't you realize that (physical) death is not real death: true death is annihilation *(fanā).* Whoever does not realize this death has no life. Do you understand what I say? I say that as long as 'you' are 'you' and caught up in your 'self', you do not really exist. When 'you' cease to be 'you', then you (truly) become yourself. Alas! What would you hear? According to us, death is that an individual dies from everything except the Beloved, so that he finds life through and in the Beloved. Then you will realize, within yourself, how death occurs.
>
> *ʿAyn al-Quḍāt Hamadānī, Tamhīdāt 374, TQH pp.287–88, in HSL1 p.329*

Other Sufis describe *fanā'* as the sequential annihilation or death of the various lower aspects of existence and being, until finally only God remains:

> Annihilation *(fanā')* is of two kinds, the first representing the obliteration of blameworthy characteristics, with subsistence representing the existence of praiseworthy ones. This is attained through rigorous asceticism. The second kind of annihilation *(fanā')* involves the obliteration of any sense of the world or the hereafter, involving immersion in the grandeur of the Creator and the beholding of God. The masters are referring to the latter when they say that poverty means being black-faced in both worlds, that is, being annihilated in both worlds.
>
> *Jurjānī, Taʿrīfāt, KTJ p.155, in SSE12 p.130*

Similarly, Ibn al-ʿArabī describes seven degrees of *fanā'.* First, there is the extinction of all passions, desires, and the contravening of religious laws; then the ego begins to lose its sense of being the doer, seeing instead that God is actually the prime Mover in all things, that His Acts lie behind all human actions and all events in the creation; thirdly, human perception – both sensory and intellectual – ceases to be the means of perceiving and understanding existence. Then, as the soul ascends, it moves from perception through the mind to the pure perception of the soul. Fifthly, the soul begins to realize that God Himself is the only perceiver, and that the soul's perception is actually that of God perceiving Himself. Following this, the perceiver begins to perceive by God's perception, but there still remains a sense of individuality. Finally, however, even the sense of having been annihilated disappears, and all becomes one in the Divine:

1. *Fanā'* of anything that is in opposition to religious laws – any sinful act.

2. *Fanā'* of acts is the level of a wayfarer whose own actions have been annihilated, and thus he can now perceive God's Acts from behind the veil of creation.

3. *Fanā'* of attributes is the state when a *ṣūfī*'s I-ness is annihilated, and he no longer performs through the attributes of a created being. He is no longer bound by mere human perceptions or discoveries.

4. *Fanā'* of essence is when a *ṣūfī* understands that his essence consists of subtle and gross conditions (*i.e.* soul and mind), the two attributes being in opposition to each other.... If a *ṣūfī*'s own being is annihilated by the real perceiver (God), he will behold God in everything and will perceive God as the one who is doing the perceiving – God perceiving Himself by Himself. But if, in this annihilation *(fanā'),* the *ṣūfī* perceives the subtlety which is his own essence and sees nothing but that, then his soul is the perceiver, and his mind is not being perceived.... And if, in the condition of *fanā',* he is watching his own mind, then his object of perception is just his imagination, and this condition is similar to that of one who is asleep and dreaming.

5. *Fanā'* of the perceiver in God is such that, if the *ṣūfī* is successful in this endeavour and his knowledge of what is perceived is true, he will be seeing God by God. God is not annihilated when He perceives His own essence, so the *ṣūfī* too will not lose perception of the world in this state; rather he perceives the world by God, not the world by the worldly.

6. *Fanā'* from others in God is when the perceiver does not perceive through his own eyes. Yet, if he still sees God's ranks and levels, he is not annihilated completely. God Almighty is eternally in ranks (there are innumerable beings and ranks and positions, and all are God; He is all of these). If he perceives God as completely united with the creation, that is a perfect perception. But at this level, (there remains a subtle sense of individuality), and since the perceiver still sees God pervading all things, (he is not entirely one with Him).

7. *Fanā' al-fanā'* is the condition when one does not see annihilation *(fanā').* This is like the state of one who is dreaming in his dream. The perfect drunk is one who does not know he is drunk.

Ibn al-'Arabī, Meccan Revelations,
MIA4 (3:220) pp.211–15, FM2 p.512, in MSG1 p.160

There is thus a progressive annihilation from the individual of all that is other than God. Junayd says:

> First, the obliteration *(fanā')* of attributes, characteristics and natural qualities in your motives, when you carry out your religious duties, making great efforts and doing the opposite of what you may desire, and compelling yourself to do the things which you do not wish to do.
>
> Second, the obliteration *(fanā')* of your following after the enjoyment of the sensation of pleasure in obedience to God's behests so that you are exclusively His, without any intermediary means of contact.
>
> Third, the obliteration *(fanā')* of the consciousness of having achieved the vision of God at the final stage of ecstasy when God's victory over you is complete. At this stage, you are obliterated and have eternal life with God, and you exist only in the existence of God because you have been obliterated. Your physical being continues, but your individuality has departed.
>
> *Al-Junayd, Rasā'il 14, in DCSB p.171*

The highest *fanā'* is described as *fanā' al-fanā'* (annihilation in annihilation) or *fanā dar fanā* (P), when the self is so annihilated that no self-consciousness remains of having annihilated the self; when absorption in the Divine is so complete that there is no self-awareness even of the absorption; when the self has been so essentially forgotten that even the forgetting has been forgotten:

> *Fanā* is when through the dominant manifestation of God within, there is no more awareness of others. It is clear that *fanā dar fanā* is included in *fanā,* for when one is still aware of one's own annihilation *(fanā),* then one cannot have been completely annihilated. Since this state is an awareness other than being aware of God, it is therefore not complete annihilation *(fanā).*
>
> *Jāmī, Lavā'iḥ 9, LTSP p.14*

> When the worshipper thinks no longer of his worship or himself, but is altogether absorbed in Him whom he worships, that state, by the mystics is called passing away *(fanā').* When a man has so passed away from himself that he feels nothing of his bodily members, nor of what is passing without, nor what is passing within his own mind, then he is detached from all that and all that is detached from him: he is journeying first *to* his Lord, then, at the end, *in* his Lord. But if during that state, the thought occurs to him, that he has passed away completely from himself, that is a blemish and a defilement. For perfect absorption means that he is unconscious not only of himself, but of his absorption. For *fanā' al-fanā'* is the goal of *fanā'.*

> Orthodox theologians may regard these words as meaningless nonsense, but that is not so, for this state of the mystics, in relation to Him whom they love, is like your state in relation to what you love of position or wealth, or like a human love, when you may be overcome by anger in thinking of a rival, or so engrossed in your beloved, that you perceive nothing else. You do not hear when someone speaks to you, nor see one who passes, though your eyes are open and you are not deaf, for the absorption makes you oblivious of all else and even of the absorption itself. For any attention to the absorption means being diverted from the cause thereof. So having heard the explanation of what is meant by passing away *(fanā')*, you should cast aside doubt and cease to deny what you cannot comprehend.
>
> *Al-Ghazālī, Kitāb al-Arbaʿīn, KADG p.34,*
> *KAG p.52, KAUD p.67; cf. in GMS pp.190–91*

And:

> When heart (mind) is perfectly quiet, it will become such that it will not perceive itself, and its awareness of itself is automatically cancelled. When it forgets itself and also forgets that it forgot, then it will be *fanā dar fanā* (annihilation in annihilation).
>
> *Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī, Ṣafīr-i Sīmurgh, MSF3 p.324*

At every stage of *fanā',* as the Sufis are keenly aware, it is the grace of God, not human effort, that makes it possible. Ibn ʿAṭā' Illāh points out that even the first extinction, the extinction of vices, cannot be achieved by human will. It is only when God calls that the soul returns to Him:

> If you were to be united with Him
> only after the extinction *(fanā')* of your vices
> and the effacement *(maḥw)* of your pretensions,
> you would never be united with Him!
> Instead, when He wants to unite you to Himself,
> He covers your attribute with His Attribute
> and hides your quality with His Quality,
> and thus He unites you to Himself
> by virtue of what comes from Him to you,
> not by virtue of what goes from you to Him.
>
> *Ibn ʿAṭā' Illāh, Kitāb al-Ḥikam 13:130,*
> *HAAI p.67, BWIC p.79*

Thus, in the process of *fanā',* the seeker cannot look at himself:

Now, you are your own shadow –
become annihilated *(fanā)* in the rays of the Sun!
How long will you look at your shadow?
Look also at His Light!

Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1938:20395, KSD4 p.188; cf. in SPL p.179

Fanā is like the philosopher's stone by which base metal is turned into gold or like a seed that is annihilated when it becomes a tree. Rūmī is alluding to his master, Shams-i Tabriz ('Sun of Tabrīz'):

What is miserable copper when the elixir comes
that it should not be annihilated *(fanā)* from its copperness
by the attribute of gold?
What is a miserable seed when spring comes
that its seedness should not be annihilated *(fanā)*
for the sake of a tree?
What is a miserable piece of wood when it falls into the fire
that it should not be transformed into sparkling flames?
All intellects and sciences are like stars,
but you are the sun of the world who rends their veils.
The world is snow and ice, and you are the burning summer –
no trace of it remains, O king, when your traces appear.
Who am I – tell me – miserable I,
that I should subsist next to you?
Your glance annihilates *(fanā)* me and a hundred like me.

Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 3071:32701–6,
KSD6 p.276; cf. in SPL pp.179–80

Some Sufis have listed *fanā'* as the eighth and last stage *(manzil)* on the spiritual journey, the stages in this classification being, *'ubūdīyah* (servantship), *'ishq* (love), *zuhd* (renunciation), *ma'rifah* (gnosis), *wajd* (ecstasy), *Ḥaqīqah* (Reality), *waṣl* (union), and *fanā'*.[3] Others have listed the stages as *sharī'ah* (external religious observances), *ṭarīqah* (spiritual path), *ma'rifah* (gnosis), *Ḥaqīqah* (Reality), *waṣl* (union), and *fanā'*.

Sufis use a number of compound expressions that qualify *fanā',* many of which possess similar meanings. Such terms include *fanā' fī al-dhikr* (annihilation in remembrance), complete absorption in the remembrance of God; *fanā' fī al-Maḥbūb* (annihilation in the Beloved), drowned in the ecstasy of the love of the Divine; *fanā' fī al-Ḥaqīqah* (annihilation in the Truth), complete absorption in the divine Reality; *fanā' fī al-tawḥīd* (annihilation in oneness), loss of all sense of self in union with the Divine; and *fanā' al-akbar* (the highest annihilation), which is synonymous with *fanā' fī al-fanā'* (annihilation in annihilation).

The goal of Sufism is not the perfecting of character; its purpose is the annihilation of the self in union with God. It is said that when Ibrāhīm Khawwāṣ observed that he had spent his forty years in Sufism developing *tawakkul* (trust in God), al-Ḥallāj answered, "You have wasted your life in cultivating your spiritual nature: what has become of *al-fanā' fī al-tawḥīd?*"[4]

See also: **baqā'**.

1. *Qur'ān* 28:88.
2. Rūmī, *Maśnavī* VI:822; *cf. MJR6* p.304, *SPL* p.175.
3. See T.P. Hughes, *Notes on Mohammedanism, NMTH* p.227.
4. Al-Ḥallāj, in *Kashf al-Maḥjūb* XIV, *KMM* p.258, *KM* p.205.

farq (A/P) *Lit.* distinction, division, difference, discrimination, dispersion, separation, severance, parting; also, the crown of the head or the parting in the hair; in Sufism, the state of separation of the lover from the divine Beloved; contrasted with the state of union *(jam'* or *waṣl);* also, the state of consciousness of one who discriminates or discerns the presence of God; hence, *al-farq al-awwal* (the first separation), the state of consciousness of one who sees the multiplicity of creation as separate from the One, and *al-farq al-thānī* (the second separation), the state of consciousness of one who sees the multiplicity of creation in the One.

Rūzbihān follows al-Ḥallāj in defining *farq* as the state of one who has risen beyond all stations on the path, whose spiritual eye is open on the Unseen, and who is aware of the presence of God in all things. He has, "an eye from God by which he observes the consequences of events, while being firmly grounded in gnosis and inner vision *(mukāshafat)* and possessed of veracious insight *(firāsat)*". He quotes al-Ḥallāj, who says: "*Farq* is awareness of the eye of the soul and of the Unseen."[1]

This definition is related to the meanings of *al-farq al-awwal* (first separation) and *al-farq al-thānī* (second separation). Al-Qāshānī defines *al-farq al-awwal* as "the veiling of Truth by creation, and the persistence of the forms of creation in their existing state".[2] Other Sufis describe it as the state of consciousness of one who is so veiled. This is the condition of almost every human being. Sufis, however, also speak of a state in which the lover is both united with God, and sees himself as separate to some extent, seeing the multiplicity, while united with the One. This is the second separation *(al-farq al-thānī).*

As a term for the separation of the lover and the Beloved, al-Qushayrī observes that separation is an essential aspect of worship, so that the worshipper may feel himself distinct from the One he is worshipping. This he contrasts with union *(jam'),* where the worshipper passes away from himself *(fanā'),* and the two become one. He writes:

> The servant must have both union *(jamʿ)* and separation *(farq)*. Whoever has no separation *(tafriqah)* has no worshipfulness. Whoever has no union *(jamʿ)* has no experience of gnosis *(maʿrifah)*.
>
> *Al-Qushayrī, Risālah, RQQQ p.38; cf. in EIM p.117*

Employing the Sufi imagery of the Beloved as a beautiful woman, ʿAṭṭār uses *farq* for the parting in the hair. His meaning seems to be that the Beloved is responsible for the tumult of love in the hearts of lovers, especially during their morning devotions:

> When at morningtide,
> you scatter the parting *(farq)* in your hair,
> what a tremendous tumult is stirred up
> by your musky tresses!
>
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 646:8863, DASN p.464; cf. in SSE1 p.108*

See also: **al-farq al-thānī**.

1. Rūzbihān, *Mashrab al-Arwāḥ* 10:45, *MARB* p.203; *cf.* in *SSE12* p.45.
2. Al-Qāshānī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Ṣūfīyah* 411, *GSTA* p.130; *cf. GST* p.90.

farq al-thānī, **al-** (A), **farq-i śānī** (P) *Lit.* the second *(thānī, śānī)* separation *(farq);* the second severance, parting, or distinction; the state of consciousness of the mystic who, having had the ecstatic vision of the supreme Essence, enters into the *farq al-thānī,* in which he sees the multiplicity of creation in the One. This separation is so that he may continue in bodily existence, fulfilling his mission in this world. It does not imply that the mystic is in any way caught up in the world of multiplicity. He still sees the One in everything. By contrast, the *farq al-awwal* (first separation) is the separation of the soul from God, which is the condition of most human beings.

Al-Qāshānī defines *farq al-thānī* as

> having the vision of the creation subsisting in God, and seeing oneness in multiplicity and multiplicity in oneness, without the one being veiled by the other.
>
> *Al-Qāshānī, Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Ṣūfīyah 412, GSTA p.130; cf. GST p.90*

Some Sufis have also seen *al-farq al-thānī* as the mystic's return to normal waking consciousness for the sake of performing various Muslim ritual obligations:

> And beyond union of union *(jamʿ al-jamʿ),* there is a sublime condition that the people call second separation *(al-farq al-thānī).* It concerns the servant being brought back to waking consciousness *(ṣaḥw)* at the times for the performance of ritually prescribed duties so that these duties might be performed in their proper moments. This return is God's and through God Most High. It does not belong to the servant nor is it of him.
>
> *Al-Qushayrī, Risālah, RQQQ p.39, in EIM p.118*

In his poem, *Tāʾīyah,* Ibn al-Fāriḍ describes his own transition from the *al-farq al-awwal* to *al-farq al-thānī.* Firstly, talking of himself and the Beloved, he says that he is no longer of the "sect who separate" – of those who see themselves as worshippers separate from God:

> The second person pronoun is no longer used between us,
> and, by its removal, I am lifted above
> the sect who separate *(firqat al-farq).*
>
> *Ibn al-Fāriḍ, Tāʾīyah 218, DFQM p.67; cf. in SIM p.219*

He goes on to say that in reality everyone is "devoted to secret polytheism *(shirk)*", the greatest heresy of monotheistic Islam. Hence, anyone who has not achieved union with the Beloved "falls … into the fire of separation *(qaṭīʿah)* from his Beloved".[1]

He then describes how he oscillated between intoxication and sobriety, between ecstatic union with the Divine and more prosaic periods when he returned to himself:

> I myself was this way for a while, before the covering was lifted.
> Having no inner vision, I still clung to dualism,
> now losing myself and being united with God through contemplation,
> now finding God and being sundered from myself through ecstasy.
> My intellect, through being attached to my sense of self,
> was separating me from God, while my loss of individuality,
> through the enravishing of my self-existence
> by my absence from myself, was uniting me with God.
>
> *Ibn al-Fāriḍ, Tāʾīyah 230–32, DFQM p.68; cf. in SIM pp.220–21*

But now, he says, he has reached a point where he is both himself and not himself; where he sees the many in the One. This he calls his "second separation *(farq al-thānī)*":

> I used to think sobriety to be my low point,
> and intoxication to be my way of ascent,
> and that self-effacement was the highest goal I could reach.

But when I cleared away the film from within me,
I saw myself restored to consciousness,
and my vision was refreshed by the Essence;
And at the time of my second separation *(farq al-thānī),*
I was enriched by a recovery
from my impoverishment in intoxication,
so that now my plurality is like unity.

Ibn al-Fāriḍ, Tā'īyah 233–35, DFQM p.69; cf. in SIM p.221

See also: **farq**.

1. Ibn al-Fāriḍ, *Tā'īyah* 227–28, *DFQM* p.68, in *SIM* p.220.

fatḥ (A/P) (pl. *futūḥ, futūḥāt*) *Lit.* victory, conquest, triumph, success; opening, revelation; in Sufism, a victory in the spiritual 'war' or struggle *(jihād);* the attainment of a particular mystical stage within; also, a mystical revelation or experience; related to *al-Fattāḥ* (the Opener, the Enlightener), one of the ninety-nine names of *Allāh.* A judge is also called a *fattāḥ,* since he is able to open or untie knotty problems; also, implies blessings or grace; hence, donations, unsolicited gifts. While the members of some *khānaqāhs* (Sufi monasteries or centres) lived on regular stipends, others relied exclusively on *futūḥ,* unsolicited donations, and would not accept any other form of payment.[1]

Maybudī defines *fatḥ* as "conquest *(fatḥ)* of the (inner) city of a human being by the army of Reality".[2] Niʿmat Allāh Valī says, "Victory *(fatḥ)* is of two kinds: over the *nafs* (lower mind)," which brings knowledge, both intellectual and intuitive, and "over the spirit *(rūḥ)*", which brings direct mystical experience and gnosis, without any "intermediary conception" or intellectualization.[3]

Al-Qāshānī, of the Ibn al-ʿArabī school, defines "openings *(al-futūḥ)*" as "Everything that is opened up to the individual by God, after having been closed to him: outward and inward blessings, such as livelihood, service, knowledge, wisdom, revelation, and so on."

He goes on to describe various levels of "victory" or "opening", as the soul ascends. First is *fatḥ al-qarīb* (approaching victory, present victory), an expression drawn from the *Qur'ān:* "He will favour you with blessings you desire – help from God and present victory *(fatḥ al-qarīb).*"[4] This victory, he says, is manifest at the "stage of the heart *(maqām al-qalb)*", and refers to the emergence of the divine Attributes during the process of conquering of the *nafs* (lower mind).

Next comes *fatḥ al-mubīn* (manifest victory, signal victory), when the heart is illuminated by the "lights of the divine Names, which clarify and perfect the attributes of the heart *(qalb)*". This, says al-Qāshānī, is the "stage

of divine friendship *(maqām al-wilāyah)*", and is indicated in the *Qur'ān* by the verse: "Indeed, We have granted you (Muḥammad) a manifest victory *(fatḥ al-mubīn),* so that God may forgive your sins, past and future."[5] These "sins", al-Qāshānī says, refer to the "attributes of both the *nafs* and the heart".

The final stage is *fatḥ al-muṭlaq* (absolute victory, highest triumph), which he also relates to the *Qur'ān:* "When God's help and victory *(naṣr Allāh wa al-fatḥ)* come …".[6] This is the stage of perfection, arising from "the manifestation of the Essence of Oneness and immersion in utter union, through complete annihilation of all the forms of creation *(al-rusūm al-Khalqīyah)*".[7]

The *Qur'ān* itself speaks specifically of the opening of the gates of paradise ("garden") to admit the godly:

> And those who feared their Lord will be led to the garden in crowds.
> And behold, when they arrive there,
> its gates are opened *(futiḥat abwābuhā),*
> and its keepers will say: "Peace be upon you!
> you have done well! Enter here, to dwell therein."
>
> *Qur'ān 39:73; cf. AYA*

For this reason, God is also known as *al-Fattāḥ* (The Opener). In the school of Ibn al-ʿArabī and later Sufi tradition, *fatḥ* means opening in a mystic sense – a revelation, an opening of the inner being to an infusion of mystic knowledge or an opening of the door to the spiritual world. 'Opening' suggests that the experience comes suddenly to the aspirant as he waits patiently in meditation at the inner door. In this context, its meaning is more or less the same as unveiling *(kashf),* tasting *(dhawq),* and a number of other such terms.

Fatḥ thus implies the attainment of the stage on the inner journey where a sense of union predominates over a sense of separation. Henceforth, the wayfarer is said to travel "*in* God", rather than "*to* God". The journey is now one of God's increasing manifestation of Himself to the soul.

Ibn al-ʿArabī devotes a chapter of his *Futūḥāt al-Makkīyah* ('Meccan Openings,' 'Meccan Revelations') to *futūḥ,* in which he distinguishes three kinds of openings: the opening of outward expression *('ibārah),* the opening of inner sweetness *(ḥalāwah),* and the opening of veils *(mukāshafah)* through God:[8]

> What brings all of this together is that whatever comes to you without self-exertion, or raising up your gaze, or seeking, is opening *(futūḥ),* whether outward or inward. Opening *(futūḥ)* … does not take from the opening *(futūḥ)* of anyone else, or from the conclusions of reflection. One of the conditions of opening *(futūḥ)* is that it be neither accompanied by reflection nor acquired through reflection.

> Our *shaykh,* Abū Madyan, used to say concerning opening *(futūḥ),* "Feed us with fresh flesh,"[9] as God said, (meaning) "Feed us not with dried meat." In other words: Do not tell us concerning opening *(futūḥ)* anything but what has been opened up to you in your hearts. Do not tell us about the opening *(futūḥ)* of others. By this he wanted to raise the aspiration of his disciples, so that they would strive to take from God.
>
> *Ibn al-ʿArabī, Meccan Revelations 2:505.17, FMIA4 (3:216) p.200; cf. SPK p.224*

Ibn al-ʿArabī also observes that a master will avoid describing inner realities to his disciple, so that the disciple does not, out of his own mind and desire, unconsciously project an image of those realities within himself, and think that he has reached that level when in fact he has not. The master wants his disciple to have genuine experiences ("openings"), not projections of the mind:

> On this path, it is not proper for the *shaykh* to inform the disciple what will take place when he gains (spiritual) knowledge in himself through opening *(fatḥ).*... Otherwise, the disciple may make that form manifest, while his inward self remains devoid of that which would lead to that form.
>
> You may object, "But it is not proper for the *shaykh* to conceal that from the disciple." I will reply: On the contrary, it is proper for him to conceal it, and even incumbent (upon him). He knows that when the reality which leads to the manifestation of that form takes up residence in the disciple, the disciple will automatically manifest that form.
>
> Then the *shaykh* will know that God has given the disciple the capacity to become one of the people of the Real. But if the *shaykh* were to give him knowledge of the reality which leads to that form while the ego *(nafs)* is still disposed to deception and untruthfulness, then he might make that form manifest without the reality, and there could be a misunderstanding.
>
> *Ibn al-ʿArabī, Meccan Revelations 3:272.32, FMIA5 (4:359) p.402; cf. SPK pp.224–25*

Sufi poets have commonly been less definitive than the Sufis analysts and systematizers in their use of terms. Thus, Ḥāfiẓ speaks of overcoming the "bewitching spells" of the *nafs,* which guard the inner "treasure" and place of tranquillity. He says that only the "merciful glance" of a saint can secure this "victory":

> The treasure of seclusion is guarded by bewitching spells;
> Victory *(fatḥ)* over them
> lies in the merciful glance of dervishes *(darvīshān).*
>
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.30, DIH p.76; cf. DHWC (36:2) p.98*

A heart that is open to the Divine is open to joy, mystic wisdom and the Essence of life and being. Thus, in a simile found in many mystic writings, Rūmī likens a heart that has not opened to Divine inspiration to a tomb:

> The house, namely the heart,
> that remains unlit by the beams of the Sun of Majesty
> is narrow and dark *(tang-u tārīk), . . .*
> destitute of the savour of the loving King.
> Neither has the radiance of the sun shone into that heart *(dil),*
> nor is there in it any spaciousness or opening of the door *(fatḥ-i bāb).*
> The tomb is better for you than a heart like that.
> Come now, arise from the tomb which is your heart.
> You are living and born of the living:
> O cheerful and winsome one,
> are you not choked by this narrow tomb?
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī II:3129–33; cf. MJR2 p.384*

Rūmī is describing three aspects of God's blessings: the "radiance of the sun" shining into the heart is *sharḥ* (explanation; hence, illumination); the expansion of the heart, here described as "spaciousness", is *basṭ* (expansion); the "opening of the door *(fatḥ-i bāb)*" in the heart is *fatḥ.* Mystics of many traditions have likewise spoken of the entry into the higher realms of consciousness as the opening of a door or gate.

See also: **al-Fattāḥ** (2.1).

1. Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam, MDI* pp.232, 347.
2. Maybudī, *Kashf al-Asrār, KA10* p.654; *cf.* in *SSE5* p.97.
3. Shāh Niʿmat Allāh Valī, *Rasāʾil, RNV3* p.181; *cf.* in *SSE5* p.97.
4. *Qurʾān* 61:13; *cf. AYA, KPA, MGK.*
5. *Qurʾān* 48:1–2; *cf. AYA, KPA, MGK.*
6. *Qurʾān* 110:1; *cf. AYA, KPA, MGK.*
7. Al-Qāshānī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Ṣūfīyah* 406–9, *GSTA* pp.128–30; *cf. GST* pp.89–90.
8. W.C. Chittick, *Sufi Path of Knowledge, SPK* p.224.
9. *Cf. Qurʾān* 35:12.

fēi, **shàng**, **shēng**, **téng** (C) *Lit.* to fly, to rise, to ascend; used in various compounds with each other, meaning to hover in the air, to ascend heavenwards; in Daoism, used metaphorically for the spirit's transcendence of the material world and its ascent to heavenly realms.

According to the poem 'Song of Dispelling Delusion and Rectifying *Dào*', attributed to master Zhōnglí Quán (*c.*C2nd CE), a student who faithfully carries

out the instructions of an enlightened master can look forward to spiritual transcendence of the physical body at will. Furthermore, such a person need no longer be concerned about the temporary nature of the physical body, because he will have realized the spiritual 'body', which is immortal and never ages:

> He will be able to fly *(fēiténg),*
> riding freely on a phoenix *(luán)* or a crane *(hè),*
> shuttling between existence and nonexistence without hindrance,
> and travelling in the three islands of Pénglái without restriction.
> Even if hundreds of thousands of aeons should elapse,
> and the oceans should turn to mulberry orchards,
> his face will still be unchanged.
>
> *Zhōnglí Quán, "Pòmí zhēngdào gē," DZ270; cf. PZGS*

"Riding freely on a phoenix or a crane" and "travelling in the three islands of Pénglái" are Daoist metaphors for spiritual ascent. Specifically, the phoenix is a symbol for the union of *yīn* and *yáng* (the two aspects of duality that characterize creation); and the crane symbolizes physical longevity and spiritual immortality. Pénglái is part of the mythical Isles of the Immortals.

The *Scripture on Inner Contemplation* (C8th CE), a text concerning meditation, cautions practitioners to guard whatever purity of body and mind they have achieved. When both body and mind have been sublimated, the spirit ascends to the spiritual realms – to its original state before it first took birth ("prior heaven"), *i.e.* the primordial. Having attained this high stage, the adept continues to live on earth – in the place and time after birth ("latter-day heaven"), *i.e.* the temporal – but he remains able to enter the spiritual realms at will:

> The *Dào* highly values long life; so guard your spirit and hold on to your root.[1] Never let your vital essence *(jīng)* and energy (*qì,* life energy) disperse, but keep them pure and always together. When body *(xíng)* and spirit *(shén)* are aligned with the *Dào,* you can fly *(fēishēng)* to Mount Kūnlún (heaven), be born in prior heaven *(xiāntiān)* and continue living in latter-day heaven *(hòutiān),* forever passing between them without boundary or distinction *(wújiàn).*
>
> *Nèiguān jīng, DZ641 6b; cf. in ELTM p.630*

Using the terminology of *nèidān* (inner alchemy), Shuǐjīngzǐ (Zhào Yīmíng, *fl.*C16th) summarizes elements of Daoist practices that lead to liberation of the spirit. The "gold elixir *(dān)*" is awareness of one's original spiritual nature:

> If you wish to return to the *Dào,* you must rid the body of impurities.
> Let the pure *qì* (life energy) rise to form the gold elixir *(dān)* and let

> the impurities sink. Accumulate (the merit of) good deeds and study the scriptures so that you will ascend to heaven *(fēishēng)* and be free of earthly existence.
>
> *Shuǐjīngzǐ, Qīngjìng jīng (4) túzhù, ZW77; cf. CSTM p.42*

Later, he announces the reward of completed practice, encouraging practitioners to be resolute and persistent in their practice, and not waver "along the way":

> Those who intuitively understand the *Dào* are people who have accumulated (the merit of) good deeds. When the teacher *(míngshī)* appears, you should humbly ask the teacher for guidance. You must practise diligently and not abandon your training along the way. When the training is complete, you will be summoned and will lose your shell *(tuōké)* and ascend to heaven *(fēishēng)*.
>
> *Shuǐjīngzǐ, Qīngjìng jīng (24) túzhù, ZW77; cf. CSTM p.154*

Master Héngyuè Zhēnzǐ (C9th) comments on a poem attributed to master Cuī Shàoxuán (C9th) about attaining and guarding the One *(Dào)*. Elaborating on the first line of the poem, he speaks of the results of refining the body and mind until the spirit is freed to fly *(fēixíng)* into the "Great Void *(tàixū)*":

> To attain the primordial One *(yī zhī yuán, i.e.* the *Dào),* one must remain steadfast even in hardship and live in solitary serenity *(jìmò)*. As one diminishes the mind and refines the body, the spirit automatically becomes more focused and the body more open. . . .
>
> Shaking off the old body like a cicada sheds its skin, you can be in several places at the same time, leave being and enter nonbeing, sit in one moment and be standing in the next, and fly *(fēixíng)* all over the Great Void *(tàixū)*.
>
> *Héngyuè Zhēnzǐ, Xuánzhū xīnjìng zhù, DZ575, JY204:3; cf. TEAK p.216*

The *Upper Scripture in Purple Script Inscribed by the Spirits* (C4th) is a compilation of meditative incantations that the *Shàngqīng* school of Daoism (*estb.*C6th) believed would, if chanted repeatedly, lead a practitioner to spiritual transcendence. By meditating in the pre-dawn hours ("consuming the flowers of dawn"), a practitioner will eventually join other transcendents ("the perfected") who have already attained the *Dào*. "Great Sublimity *(tàiwēi)*" and "Purple Court *(zǐtíng)*" refer to celestial realms that symbolize mystical experience in spiritual regions:

> Consuming the flowers of dawn, I
> will join in spirit *(líng)* with the perfected *(zhēn),*

> will fly *(fēi)* in transcendence *(xiān)* to Great Sublimity,
> will rise above *(shàngshēng)* to the Purple Court.
>
> *Yáng Xī, Língshū zǐwén shàngjīng, DZ639 5a; cf. EDSB p.316*

An early and influential scripture of the *Língbǎo* school of Daoism (*estb.*C5th) similarly says that supplications and private recitation of scriptures in one's meditation chamber will lead to "Upper Clarity *(shàngqīng)*", one of the three pure realms *(sānqīng)* in the cosmology of the *Língbǎo* school. In other words, the practitioner will 'fly' or rise to higher realms of spiritual consciousness:

> Your name will be written in the highest heavens so that, once your merit-making is complete and your virtues fulfilled, you may fly *(fēishēng)* to Upper Clarity.
>
> *Dùrén jīng, DZ87 1:29; cf. EDSB p.413*

Secret Essentials of the Most High, the first Daoist encyclopaedia, commissioned by Emperor Wǔ in the sixth century, includes two incantations to Daoist gods:

> May I reverently follow the true *Dào,*
> (as set forth in) the red writings and jade documents (scriptures),
> the talismans and instructions of the nine high heavens!
>
> May I harness the dragons and get ready to rise –
> rise up to the peaceful abode of heaven,
> and soon become a flying immortal *(fēixiān)!*
>
> *Wúshàng mìyāo, DZ1138 6b; cf. TEAK (50) p.112*

Many stories concerning mystical ascent, often seemingly hagiographic, are recorded in Daoist texts. One such text from around the tenth century recounts the legend of how the young Daoist adept Lad Qú made a mystical ascent in broad daylight in the presence of witnesses:

> On the side of the courtyard, there was a huge chestnut tree, no more than a couple of yards from where everybody was standing. Lad Qú now turned his back to the crowd and, very slowly, walked over to stand beside the tree. From there, he gradually dissolved and vanished into thin air, accompanied by a tremendous sound, like the howling of a tornado or the deep rumbling of thunder.
>
> *Huáng xiānshī Qú tóng jì, in Quán Tángwén, QTDG 10b; cf. TEAK p.330*

An early instructional treatise of the *Quánzhēn* school (*estb.*C12th) concerning the 'great mystery *(tàixuán)*' encourages students to persevere in their

efforts. Having mentioned several experiences reported by adepts, the text summarizes the "wonderful experience" of attaining spiritual immortality:

> With continued practice, you will one day be able to fly up to the sky *(fēishēng).* These (aforementioned experiences) are all part of the wonderful experience of becoming an immortal *(xiān).*
>
> *Tàixuán bǎodiǎn, DZ1034, NEL (2:1.4) p.92*

As the practitioner reaches higher and higher levels of spiritual awareness, the spirit becomes lighter and lighter and 'flies heavenwards' towards union with the *Dào* – its source and origin. The unknown author of the *Sacred Treatise on the Great Mystery* says that, with diligence, practitioners will receive their reward:

> Practise these techniques diligently and you will be able to fly *(shēng)* to the sky, become omniscient, and never age (*i.e.* you will attain spiritual immortality).
>
> *Tàixuán bǎodiǎn, DZ1034, NEL (2:2.4) p.98*

Another twelfth-century master, Sūn Bù'èr, describes the wonder of spiritual flight. In one poem she says that such experiences happen 'at the right time', meaning when the mind has been completely withdrawn into 'the stillness of the valley' (a metaphor for the emptiness of the spirit). At that moment the spirit is automatically liberated from the physical and is free to cross the "ocean" of all existence:

> The time of the merging
> is when the valley *(gǔ)* is revealed.
> The smallest space
> is where you soar *(shàng)* to the spiritual skies.
> Once the immortal *(xiān)* has separated from the mortal *(fán)* –
> detached, you will cross *(dù)* the ocean.
>
> *"Chōngjǔ," Sūn Bù'èr yuánjūn fǎyǔ, ZW370, JY203*

"You soar to the spiritual skies" means the ascent of the spirit *(shén)* in meditation, which in Daoist texts is commonly called *fēishēng* (flying to heaven). This ascent may be undertaken at any time, night or day, while leading a normal human life – hence the frequent appearance of the expression *báirì fēishēng* (flying to heaven in broad daylight).

Adding to the flying imagery, one of the synonyms for a *xiān* (an immortal, a transcendent) is *yǔrén* (feathered person), alluding to the 'flight' of spiritual immortals. According to master Liú Yīmíng (1734–1821), the flight of the spirit implies revelations of the *zhēnshēn,* the true or real 'body' that is present "in everyone":

> Those who have attained the *Dào* are often referred to as those who are 'transformed with wings to soar *(yǔhuà fēishēng)*' or who have 'broken away from their shell *(tuōké)* to become true'. Both expressions imply that a body of Truth *(zhēnshēn)* arises out of the physical body. This body of Truth *(zhēnshēn)* is inherent in everyone, but people are deluded by the world and deceived by illusory thoughts, so they do not know it, even though it is right in front of them.
>
> Recognize it and cultivate it with perseverance, then substance will be produced from no substance and form will be produced from no form, transcending and transforming into an immortal *(chéngxiān)* with a strong, enduring, and indestructible (spiritual) body.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùdào lù, ZW268, DS18*

See also: **báirì fēishēng**, **xiān** (7.1), **yǔhuà**.

1. *Cf. Dàodé jīng* 16.

fikr (A/P) (pl. *afkār*) *Lit.* thought, reflection, cogitation; also, deep meditation, mental remembrance of God; thought devoted intensively to pondering the blessings and the creation of God. As a mental faculty, *fikr* is the power of thinking and reasoning that belongs only to human beings. It is the mind's ability to make rational sense out of the information gathered by sense perception and acquired as a result of imagination or speculative thought.

Fikr is from the verb *fakara* (to consider, reflect, contemplate, meditate) and is etymologically related to *tafakkur* (consideration, reflection). The *Qur'ān* uses various related verb forms, repeatedly advising human beings to reflect, saying that for those who do so, the entire creation is a sign of the greatness and presence of God.[1]

Fayż Kāshānī identifies *fikr* as one of the five faculties of the *nafs-i nāṭiqah-'i qudsīyah* (spiritual, holy soul), these being: reflection *(fikr),* remembrance *(dhikr),* knowledge *('ilm),* forbearance *(ḥilm),* and awareness *(nabāhah).*[2]

Different Sufi writers have taken *fikr* to mean either mental cogitation or spiritual meditation. Ibn al-'Arabī, for example, sees *fikr* as a rational faculty and counsels care in exercising it:

> Reflection *(fikr)* is a state which offers no preservation from error. Hence it is a station of danger *(khaṭar).* He who possesses it does not know if he is mistaken or correct, since reflection *(fikr)* accepts either.
>
> *Ibn al-'Arabī, Meccan Revelations 2:230.19, FMIA3 (2:144) p.347, SPK p.165*

In fact, he describes "reflection" as a curse inflicted by God upon human beings:

> God afflicted man with an affliction with which no other of His creatures was afflicted. Through it He takes him to felicity or wretchedness, depending upon how He allows him to make use of it. This affliction with which God afflicted him is that He created within him a faculty named 'reflection *(fikr)*'. He made this faculty the assistant of another faculty called 'reason *('aql)*'. Moreover, He compelled reason, in spite of its being reflection's *(fikr)* chief, to take from reflection *(fikr)* what it gives. God gave reflection *(fikr)* no place to roam except the faculty of imagination *(khayāl).* God made the faculty of imagination the locus which brings together everything given by the sensory faculties.
>
> *Ibn al-'Arabī, Meccan Revelations 1:125.33, FMIA1 (1:7) p.194, SPK pp.162–63*

He goes on to say that the imagination takes its input from the senses where it creates imaginary forms that, although drawn from the sensory realm, have no reality. Ibn al-'Arabī is also scathing of those who use the rational faculty to try and understand God. He points out that they disagree with each other, and are unable to use their rational faculty to determine anything fundamental about God, the soul, the body, and so on. In the end, he says, they fall back on doctrine (the "law") to argue their case – which is not the exercise of reason:

> One of them said that He is a body, another that He is not a body. One said that He is a substance, another that He is not a substance. One said that He is in a direction, another that He is not in a direction. But God did not command a single one of His creatures to plunge into this sort of thing to any extent, neither him who negates, nor him who affirms.
>
> If these people were asked to verify their knowledge of a single essence in the cosmos, they would not know how to do so. If it were said to this plunger: "How does your soul govern your body? Is it inside or outside it, or neither inside nor outside? Consider that with your rational faculty! And this extraneous thing through which the animate body moves, sees, hears, imagines, and reflects – to what does it go back? To a single thing, or to many things? Does it go back to a substance (a primary cause), an accident (a secondary cause), or a body?" If you were to seek from him rational proofs – not proofs derived from the law *(sharī'ah)* – he would not find any rational proofs whatsoever. He would not know through the rational faculty that spirits have a subsistence and an existence after death.
>
> *Ibn al-'Arabī, Meccan Revelations 3:81.30, FMIA5 (4:322) p.119, SPK p.63*

As a spiritual practice, rather than intellectual cogitation, some Sufis say that *fikr* involves *murāqabah* (meditation), adding that the requirements of effective *fikr* include guarding against sin, remaining grateful for whatever

God has given, and being patient and persevering while continuing to ponder God's creativeness. Ibn 'Aṭā' Illāh explains that for intellectuals, *fikr* is the thinking process, but for mystics, it is what illumines the soul:

> Meditation *(fikr)* is the lamp of the heart,
> so when it goes out, the heart has no illumination.
> Meditation *(fikr)* is of two kinds:
> the meditation *(fikr)* of belief and faith,
> and the meditation *(fikr)* of contemplation and vision.
> The first is for the adepts of reflective thought;
> the second is for the adepts of contemplation and spiritual vision.
>
> *Ibn 'Aṭā' Illāh, Kitāb al-Ḥikam 25:261–62,*
> *HAAI p.88; cf. BWIC p.111, SAKH p.59*

Al-Ghazālī describes meditation *(fikr)* as the "key to spiritual illumination" and, like many Sufis, pairs it with the practice of *dhikr* (recollection, repetition):

> Meditation *(fikr)* is the key to spiritual illumination. Great love is developed where the greatness of the personality of God is inscribed in the heart.
>
> *Al-Ghazālī, Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn 1:10; cf. RRS p.28*

> Constant remembrance *(dhikr)* of the Lord and meditation *(fikr)* develops love for God, provided the practice is one pointed and there is no other desire in the heart except the pleasure of the Lord.
>
> *Al-Ghazālī, Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn 4:3, IUDG4 p.220; cf. RRS p.190*

One of the earliest Sufis, Ḥasan al-Baṣrī described *fikr* as the "mirror that makes you see what good there is in you – and what evil."[3] Rūmī also says:

> They (Sufis) have polished their hearts
> with recollection *(źikr)* and meditation *(fikr),*
> so that the mirror of the heart
> may receive the pure image *(naqsh).*
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī I:3154; cf. MJR2 p.172*

Others praise the benefits of *fikr.* Khashīsh Nisa'ī (C9th) says, "Some by force of *fikr* claim to enjoy in this world the spiritual life of God, the angels and the prophets, and to feast with the *ḥūris.*" Al-Ḥallāj speaks of the "garden of *dhikr*" visited by Muḥammad and the "process of *fikr*" by which he reached there. Al-Ḥallāj also says that the fruits of *dhikr* are "refreshment for the soul", while *fikr* guides the soul "towards the single divine Majesty".[4]

ʿInāyat Khān says that *fikr* is practised along with *źikr,* sometimes in assembly, in the *ḥalqah* or circle of the Sufis, so that the power of one helps the other.[5] He also maintains that *fikr* requires awareness of one's breathing:

> In *fikr* it is not necessary that one should breathe in a certain way, different from one's usual breathing. *Fikr* is to become conscious of the natural movement of the breath, and picturing breath as a swing, to put in that swing a certain thought, as a babe in the cradle, to rock it.
>
> *ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK13 p.146*

ʿInāyat Khān equates this practice with the Indian practice of *tapa* (self-discipline), and says that the mastery of *fikr* is said to enable a healer to heal someone at a distance by concentrated thought. It is also said to bring many health benefits to the practitioner himself, regulating the digestion and circulation, as well as warding off negative mental states.[6]

See also: **tafakkur**.

1. *E.g. Qur'ān* 13:3, 6:50, 30:8, 21, 59:21.
2. Fayż Kāshānī, *Kalimāt-i Maknūnah* 34, *KMFK* p.93, in *SSE9* p.79.
3. Ḥasan al-Baṣrī; *cf.* in *BASW* p.341 (n.67).
4. See "fikr," *Encyclopaedia of Islam, EI2.*
5. ʿInāyat Khān, *Sufi Message, SMIK10* p.86.
6. ʿInāyat Khān, *Sufi Message, SMIK4* p.87, *SMIK13* p.155.

fire See **inner fire**.

flight of the soul, **flight of the spirit** The ascent of the soul from the body, as at death, but during life; also, the escape of the soul from the body and from this world; a term used by many Christian, Sufi, and other mystics.

The soul in the body is sometimes compared to a bird in a cage. But when, during spiritual practice or even otherwise, the soul leaves the body in spiritual flight or transport, it feels a sense of tremendous freedom, elation and blissful intoxication. It feels as if at long last it is able to fly, having previously been held captive in the prison of the body. Teresa of Ávila describes this experience as gentle, joyful, and silent:

> The flight taken by the spirit when it soars high above all created things, and above itself first of all,…is a gentle and a joyful flight and also a silent one.
>
> *Teresa of Ávila, Life 20, CWTA1 p.128*

John of the Cross speaks of the "flight of the spirit from out of the flesh",[1] the "flight of contemplation"[2] and the "subtle flights of the spirit",[3] further explaining:

> That we may the better understand what flight this is, it is to be noted that, . . . in that visitation of the divine Spirit, the spirit of the soul is enraptured with great force to communicate with the Spirit, . . . and ceases to experience (bodily) feelings and to be active in the body, since it is active in God.
>
> For this cause St Paul said, with respect to that rapture of his, that he knew not whether his soul was receiving it in the body or out of the body.[4]
>
> It is not . . . to be understood that the soul . . . forsakes the natural body, but that it has no activity in it. And it is for this reason that, in these raptures and flights, the body remains without its senses and, although the greatest pains be inflicted upon it, it does not feel them. For this is not like other swoons and trances, which are natural, so that their subjects return to themselves with the first touch of pain.
>
> *John of the Cross, Spiritual Canticle 13:6; cf. CWJC2 pp.242–43*

And he also adds that the flight of the soul is a matter of inner communion with the divine Word:

> By this spiritual flight, which we have just described, is denoted a lofty estate and union of love wherein after much spiritual exercise God places the soul. . . . (And this) is called spiritual betrothal with the Word, the Son of God. . . .
>
> At the beginning, when this happens for the first time, God communicates to the soul great things concerning Himself, beautifying it with greatness and majesty, decking it with gifts and virtues, and clothing it with knowledge and honour of God, just as if it were a bride on the day of her betrothal.
>
> And upon this happy day, . . . being adorned with the good things which I am describing, she enters into a state of peace and delight and sweetness of love, . . . wherein she does nothing else but relate and sing the wonders of her Beloved.
>
> *John of the Cross, Spiritual Canticle 14–15.2; cf. CWJC2 p.247*

So great is the ecstasy of the soul that there are times when it feels that it would happily relinquish bodily life. But unless its time to leave has come, permanent flight is not possible. As John of the Cross, depicting the love of the soul for the Word, writes:

> Very willingly did the soul leave the body upon that spiritual flight, thinking that its life was coming to an end, and that it would be able to have fruition of its Spouse (divine Beloved) forever, and remain with him unhindered by a veil.
>
> But the Spouse prevented its flight, saying: "Return, O dove." It was as though he had said: "O dove, in the quick and lofty flight of your contemplation, and in the love with which you burn, and the simplicity with which you go, . . . return from this lofty flight in which you aspire to attain to possession of me in truth. For the time has not yet arrived for such lofty knowledge. Adapt yourself to this lower knowledge that I now communicate to you in this excess of yours (extremity of devotion).
>
> *John of the Cross, Spiritual Canticle 13:8; cf. CWJC2 pp.243–44*

Many other mystics have also written of the soul's flight from the body into the higher regions of the spirit. Gregory of Nyssa explains that just as objects naturally fall downwards, as long as they are not hindered,

> so too, the soul moves in the opposite direction, light and swiftly moving upwards once it is released from sensuous and earthly attachments, soaring from the world below up towards the heavens. And if nothing comes from above to intercept its flight, seeing that it is of the nature of the Good to attract those who raise their eyes towards It, the soul keeps rising ever higher and higher, stretching with its desire for heavenly things; . . . and thus will it continue always to soar ever higher. For because of what it has already attained, the soul does not wish to abandon the heights that lie beyond it. And thus the soul moves ceaselessly upwards.
>
> *Gregory of Nyssa, Life of Moses, PG44 cols.397d ff., VMTP 2:219ff.; cf. GGG p.144*

The Greek-speaking Gregory was well-versed in the writings of Plato, which – like all the early Christian fathers – he understood from a mystical perspective. In fact, Plato is regarded as one of the primary origins of the terminology of Christian mysticism. Plato writes that the flight of the soul is from the evils of this world:

> Evils . . . can never pass away; for there must always remain something that is antagonistic to good. Having no place among the gods in heaven, of necessity they hover around the mortal nature and this earthly sphere. Therefore we ought to take flight from earth to heaven as quickly as we can; and flight is assimilation to God, so far as that is possible; and to be assimilated to Him, is to become holy, just, and wise.
>
> *Plato, Theaetetus 176a–b; cf. DP3 p.275*

Hieroclēs, likewise, in his commentary on some verses attributed to Pythagoras, says that Pythagoras recommends

> our purgation from all carnal affections, and teaches man to return home to himself, that he may bid farewell to this abode of generation and corruption (birth and death), and take his flight to the Elysian Fields and to the most pure aether.
>
> *Hieroclēs, Golden Verses of Pythagoras 67–69, HVP p.126*

Plato's imagery of the soul's flight receives its most elaborate exposition in the allegorical myth related in *Phaedrus,* where the soul is likened to a "winged charioteer":

> When perfect and fully winged, she (the soul) soars upward and has the whole universe within her grasp; but the soul that loses her feathers, fails in her flight and sinks down, coming finally to rest on solid ground, taking to herself an earthly body.
>
> *Plato, Phaedrus 246c*

The winged charioteers, drawn by a pair of winged horses, are led by the mighty *Zeus* on a circuit of the heavens. The horses of the gods and the immortals are both of noble stock, and easily carry their riders beyond the confines of the heavenly circuit, where they behold a vision of the "truly existent Being", the "real, eternal Absolute". Human souls, on the other hand, says Plato in a graphic description of human existence, are drawn by a mixed pair of horses of which one is noble and the "other the opposite in every way". As a result, they struggle to a greater or lesser extent to gain a vision of Reality. A few manage to attain an impaired vision, but the majority are carried round, "trampling and jostling one another, each eager to outstrip the other; and great is the turmoil and conflict and sweat."[5]

The soul that "follows after God and obtains some vision of the Truth" remains "free from harm", but:

> When, through inability to follow (God), she fails to see the vision and, overtaken by some misfortune, sinks under the burden of forgetfulness and wickedness and, because of that burden, she sheds the feathers of her wings and falls to earth – then she is dealt with according to the law.
>
> *Plato, Phaedrus 248c*

And according to this "law of *Adrasteia* (Destiny)", the souls reincarnate in earthly bodies. Subsequently, those who live spiritual lives as lovers of wisdom (*philosophos,* a philosopher) can "regain their wings" and once more

enjoy the "blessed vision" of the Divine. And the means of attaining this, says Plato, is by "turning their attention to the Divine" through the "correct practice … of recollection"[6] – *i.e.* inner meditation or contemplation.

Plotinus (*c.*205–270 CE), following and expanding upon Plato some six centuries later, also emphasizes that the soul's flight is entirely inward, accomplished by closing the outer eyes and seeking another kind of vision. Flight, here, is as much a matter of escape, as soaring into the realms of spirit:[7]

> "Let us fly, then, to our own dear country":[8] this is the soundest counsel. But what then is our way of escape? How are we to gain the open sea? … Our country from which we came is there, whence we have come; and there too is our Father. What then is our course, what the manner of our flight? This is no journey for the feet, for our feet only carry us from place to place, from one country to another. Nor need you ready a carriage or a boat to carry you away. Set aside all these things, and do not look. Close your eyes, and call instead upon another kind of vision *(opsis),* which is to be awakened within you, which everyone has but few use.
>
> *Plotinus, Enneads 1:6.8; cf. PA1 pp.256–59, PEC p.25*

Further on, Plotinus adds that it entails "disengaging the self from the body":

> The "flight hence", we read, is not a matter of place, but of acquiring virtue, of disengaging the self from the body; this is the flight from matter, since association with the body implies association with matter. Plato explains somewhere how a man frees himself and how he remains bound; and the phrase "to live among the gods" means to live among spiritual beings, for they are the immortals.
>
> *Plotinus, Enneads 1:8.7; cf. PEC p.30*

It is, says Plotinus in an oft-quoted comment, "a flight of the alone to the Alone", of the particle to the Whole, of the one to the One, from which it has never really been separated:

> When the soul begins to ascend, it comes to something none other than itself. Thus alone, detached, uplifted, it is in the likeness of higher Being. If it passes still higher, from image to original, then it has reached the end of the journey. This is the life of gods and of the godlike, and it is blessed among men: liberation from the alien that besets us here, a life taking no pleasure in the things of earth, a flight of the alone to the Alone.
>
> *Plotinus, Enneads 6:9.11; cf. PEC p.360*

See also: **ascent of the soul**, **dying while living** (8.3), **reincarnation and transmigration (in ancient Greek philosophy)** (6.3).

1. John of the Cross, *Spiritual Canticle* 13:5, *CWJC2* p.242.
2. John of the Cross, *Spiritual Canticle* 13:11, *CWJC2* p.245.
3. John of the Cross, *Spiritual Canticle* 13:7, *CWJC2* p.243.
4. *2 Corinthians* 12:2–3.
5. Plato, *Phaedrus* 246a–c, 248a–b.
6. Plato, *Phaedrus* 248e–249c.
7. See also Plotinus, *Enneads* 1:2.3.
8. *Cf.* Homer, *Iliad* 2:140; *Odyssey* 5:37, 204.

freedom Personal liberty; the condition of being without bondage or limitation; the state of being free, either politically, socially, morally, or spiritually, *etc.;* the liberty to act in a chosen and/or predetermined manner; freedom to choose and determine the events of life; freedom of thought – *i.e.* freedom (either personal or socio-political) to think or not to think any particular thought, usually also implying the freedom to express that thought in word, art, or literature; spiritually, release from pain, suffering, the individual self, sin, evil, the consequences of actions (good and bad), and so on; release from all constraints of body, mind, and created things; hence also, release from the cycle of birth and death; salvation, liberation, deliverance, redemption, emancipation.

Considered superficially, it may be thought that freedom means doing whatever comes to mind, whenever one feels like it, never asking how those thoughts or desires arise or what effect those actions might have on the 'freedom' of others. Spiritually, such 'freedom' is regarded as slavery to the senses, and to the mind and its desires. True spiritual freedom implies complete control and conquest of the mind and senses, such that one's thoughts and actions are not influenced by uncontrolled or unconscious impulses. Spiritual freedom also leads to true wisdom, since wisdom stems from a mind under control and a spiritualized consciousness. As an unknown writer, possibly Pythagorean of the early Christian period, summarizes:

> After God, no one is as free as the wise man.
> *Sentences of Sextus 27:309, NHS28 pp.306–7*

Freedom of the soul or spirit is what Jesus is referring to when he says, according to John's gospel:

> You shall know the Truth,
> and the Truth shall make you free. . . .

> If the Son therefore shall make you free,
> you shall be free indeed.
>
> *John 8:32, 36; cf. KJV*

Here, "Truth" is the divine Word, while the Son is both the Word and its personification in a master. This is the Power that is truly capable of liberating a soul from birth and death, and taking it back to God.

Many mystically minded writers have taken advantage of the wordplay suggested by man's confused understanding of the nature of freedom. The gnostic writer of the *Gospel of Philip* observes enigmatically:

> He who has knowledge of the Truth is a free man, but the free man does not sin, for, "He who sins is the slave of sin."[1] … In fact, he who is really free through (mystic) knowledge is a slave because of love for those who have not yet been able to attain to the freedom of knowledge.
>
> *Gospel of Philip 77, NHS20 pp.196–99*

The author is speaking of the spiritually liberated – the masters or spiritually enlightened ones – as those who are "really free". Yet, he adds, they are also the slaves of love, serving those who are in bondage to this world:

> In this world, the slaves serve the free. In the kingdom of heaven, the free will minister to the slaves.
>
> *Gospel of Philip 72, NHS20 pp.186–87*

In Christian literature, freedom is generally considered to be freedom from human imperfection. As it says in the *Philokalia,* "Spiritual freedom is release from the passions,"[2] and, "Freedom and happiness of soul consist in genuine purity and detachment from transitory things."[3]

The unknown Rhineland mystic who wrote the *Book of the Poor in Spirit* devotes several chapters to the subject. A free soul, he maintains, is someone who is truly attached to God and is inwardly in control of himself:

> Freedom is a perfect purity and detachment that seeks the Eternal. Freedom is a withdrawn and separated being, similar to God or wholly attached to God.… All things are equal to a free soul – pain or pleasure, slander or praise, poverty or wealth, weal or woe, friend or foe. A free soul never permits herself to be drawn away by anything that might keep her apart from God or mediate between herself and God.… When the soul can endure only what is best, and can entirely discard evil, she is wholly free.… For freedom does not consist in sins. But slavery does, as St John says: "Whosoever commits sin is the slave of sin."[4] Real freedom is so noble that no one gives it except

> God the Father. It is a power that flows directly from God the Father into the soul and it grants all possibility to the soul.
>
> *Book of the Poor in Spirit 1:2.1; cf. BPSG pp.59–60*

The same writer goes on to say that "Godlike freedom springs from true humility.... Freedom of an inferior kind springs from pride." This "misdirected freedom" can be either bodily or spiritual. The former arises in someone with considerable wealth, power and friends, which give the illusion of freedom. The latter is effectively spiritual pride, of which, he says, there are three forms. It arises in someone who has practised many forms of spiritual exercise and regards himself as superior to others; or in someone who understands the conceptual framework of human perfection and erroneously believes himself to have attained it; or in someone who has experienced visions and incorrectly imagines himself to have attained a lofty spiritual estate.[5]

Thomas à Kempis summarizes the matter when he observes that spiritual freedom entails surrender of the self to God:

> A free offering of yourself into the hands of God must ... precede all your doings if you desire to obtain freedom and grace. The reason why so few receive inward light and freedom is that they cannot wholly renounce self.
>
> *Thomas à Kempis, Imitation of Christ 8, ICTK pp.198–99*

In traditions that have espoused a belief in transmigration of the immortal soul, freedom from the body, from rebirth, and from all materiality is a recurrent theme. Thus, in a Manichaean poem in which the devotee begs specifically and continuously for release from the "hell" of repeated rebirths in an endless succession of bodies, the saviour responds:

> You shall be saved from anguish,...
> you shall not fall into hell....
> You shall lie no longer within the foul body,...
> you shall no more endure that heaviness amid all sicknesses....
>
> You shall reign in gladness and in freedom forevermore.
> You shall enter that land,...
> and shall rejoice in the gladness....
> You shall abide in tranquillity,...
> and anguish shall never more overtake you.
>
> *Manichaean Hymns, Huwīdagmān VII:20–22, VIIIa:1–3; cf. MHCP pp.106–7, 110–11*

See also: **liberation**.

1. *John* 8:34.
2. Thalassios the Libyan, *On Love* 33, *Philokalia, PCT2* p.314.
3. St Antony of Egypt, *On Character* 18, *Philokalia, PCT1* p.332.
4. *John* 8:34.
5. *Book of the Poor in Spirit* 1:4.1–3, *BPSG* pp.70–74.

fudōshin (J) *Lit.* immovable *(fudō)* mind *(shin);* imperturbable or equanimous mind; a term used in *Zen* and *Mikkyō* (esoteric) Buddhism for a state of mental equipoise, composure, confidence and fearlessness, always calm and unmoved by emotion; a mind filled with determination and resolve, free from confusion, hesitation, or doubt; a mind not fixed on anything in particular, yet seeing everything; a mind that is free, since it is not obstructed by dwelling on particulars and details; attained by means of *zazen* (sitting meditation).

Through the practice of *zazen,* students learn to centre themselves and maintain an internal focus under all circumstances. *Fudōshin* is their shield against the vicissitudes of daily life, enabling them to remain in control of themselves, free from reactive emotions, able to think clearly whatever may be happening around them.

In medieval Japan, *zazen* was included in the training regimes of *samurai* warriors and martial-arts practitioners. *Fudōshin* represented the quality of a *samurai* or martial artist who had reached a high level of confidence and equanimity, whose actions proceeded from a peaceful, impassive and undisturbed mind, free from fear and anger, filled with natural courage in the face of challenge and danger. It is commonly related that the great Japanese swordsman Tsukahara Bokuden (1489–1571) used to say, "Mental calmness *(fudōshin),* not skill, is the sign of a mature *samurai.*" The same attitude of mind is sought today among practitioners of *kendō* (way of the sword, swordsmanship), *kyūdō* (way of the bow, archery), *jūdō* (gentle way), *aikidō* (way of harmonizing life energy), *karate-dō* (way of the empty fist), and so on. The twentieth-century scholar D.T. Suzuki observes:

> The swordsman is advised to retain this state of mentality even when he is engaged in a deadly combat. He forgets the seriousness of his situation. He has no thought of life and death. His is an 'immovable mind *(fudōshin)*'. The *fudōshin* is like the moon reflected in the stream. The waters are in motion all the time, but the moon retains its serenity. The mind moves in response to the ten thousand situations, but remains ever the same. The art culminates here. All the scheming of the intellect has been quieted, and no artifice finds room for its demonstration.
>
> *D.T. Suzuki, Zen and Japanese Culture, ZJCS p.148*

The modern *kyūdō* instructor Jitsudo Tsuha Roshi says that the essential aspect of *fudōshin* is transcendence of the illusory sense of self:

> It is important to realize that there is no such thing as 'I' (self). The 'I' exists when the true self is obscured by the absence of *fudōshin* or when you are not "abiding immovably in the First Principle".[1] The original mind (or true self) turns into the deluded mind the moment it is attached to a thought or action.
>
> *Jitsudo Tsuha Roshi, Zen Kyudo, ZKJT p.12*

See also: **kyūdō** (8.5).

1. *Vimalakīrti Sūtra* 17, *T14* 475:537c13; *cf.* in *PSWC* p.53.

gadlut de moḥin, **moḥin de gadlut** (He) *Lit.* greatness *(gadlut)* of the *(de)* mind *(moḥin);* a period of inner expansion in spiritual life; contrasted with *katnut de moḥin* (smallness of mind); terms used in early Hasidism to describe the ups and downs of spiritual life.

In the days of the Baʿal Shem Tov (C18th, the first Hasidic master), disciples would come to him saying that they experienced inconsistency in their devotion, and were often unable to rally the necessary concentration or desire for their spiritual practice, or to follow the elevated way of life he taught. The Baʿal Shem Tov would reply that fluctuation in devotion and spiritual aspiration is natural, since there is an ebb and flow, an expansion and contraction, in everything. On the path of spiritual awakening, everyone passes through ups and downs. As the Baʿal Shem Tov observed:

> A delight that is perpetual becomes a habit and ceases to be a delight; therefore there are rises and falls in a man's worship of the blessed Lord so that he will have the delight which is the main purpose of worshipping the blessed Lord.
>
> *Baʿal Shem Tov, Keter Shem Tov 121, KSTY p.16a, in BMME p.131*

Gadlut and *katnut* were also used to describe the overall spiritual progress of an individual – the degree of attachment to God – which could also be understood as elevated and constricted consciousness. Today, the more common usage of these terms is *moḥin de gadlut* and *moḥin de katnut.*

The terms were drawn from the belief of later kabbalists that the mind or consciousness *(moḥin)* draws down energy or power from the higher *sefirot* (emanations of qualities or attributes of the divine light), especially in their configurations known as *parẓufim* (faces) – a concept introduced by Rabbi Isaac Luria (C16th). When the *sefirot* or *parẓufim* are in harmony

in the highest realm of emanation, the power flows freely into the lower realms. This has a positive effect on human devotion. When the *sefirot* are in disharmony, the influence is negative. So when the higher powers in the supernal realms are in harmony, a spiritual seeker experiences inner expansion *(gadlut de moḥin);* when they are in disharmony, he experiences obstacles in his devotion and is in a state of contraction *(katnut de moḥin).* In this way, the kabbalists and *ḥasidim* linked human experience in the material realm to cosmic activity in the spiritual.

Luria's concepts were intertwined with ancient Jewish religious history:

> The *moḥin* (consciousness) might be imagined as bundles of divine vitality originating in *Arikh Anpin* (the Long-Suffering One, the divine Source), as well as in *Abba* and *Imma* (the higher *parẓufim* of father and mother), which flow below in order to complete the structures of *Ẓeʿir* and *Nukva* (the lower *parẓufim* of male and female), filling them with strength.... The first of these is *moḥin de katnut.*...
>
> When the ancient Temple in Jerusalem still existed, the *moḥin* were continuously present in *Ẓeʿir.* Ever since the destruction of the Temple, however, the *moḥin* constantly descend and re-ascend. This is why there is a need now for near-continuous prayer, so as to draw down the *moḥin* from on high. This was why the early pietists (*ḥasidim rishonim,* C2nd BCE) used to add two hours to each prayer service. The additional devotions served to sustain the descent of the *moḥin.* From one point of view, all prayer is dedicated to nourishing *Ẓeʿir* by means of restoring the *moḥin* to it and thus bring about the conditions under which *Ẓeʿir* and *Nukva* can join one another in utterly perfect and enduring marital love.
>
> *Lawrence Fine, Physician of the Soul, PSHC pp.236–37*

The Baʿal Shem Tov taught that *katnut* and *gadlut* are not only human states of mind; they are states of being that are present in all creation from the highest to the lowest realms. His grandson, Rabbi Baruch of Mezhbuzh, quotes him as saying: "Just as there exists a state of *katnut* and *gadlut* in the supernal *sefirot,* there is a similar state in every thing, even in the clothes that a man wears."[1] Explaining the Baʿal Shem Tov's perspective, Gershom Scholem observes:

> *Katnut,* the minor state, is the state of imperfection, even of degradation, whereas *gadlut* means the full development of a thing to its highest state.... *Katnut,* then, is the time of man's struggle with his lower instincts in order to lift himself up to *gadlut,* a state that knows of no struggle, but only of the enjoyment that comes with victory over the darker side of his nature.
>
> *Gershom Scholem, Messianic Idea in Judaism, MIJS p.220*

1. Baʿal Shem Tov, in Rabbi Baruch of Mezhbuzh, in *MIJS* p.219.

gāngfēng (C) *Lit.* strong *(gāng)* wind *(fēng);* in Daoism, the wind *(fēng)* of *gāng,* which in the Chinese zodiac refers to the seven bright stars constituting the handle of *běidǒu qīxīng,* the Big Dipper or Plough, made of the seven brightest stars in the constellation *Ursa Major;* a heavenly wind on which immortals *(xiān)* ride; a metaphor for the spirit's inner ascent to higher spiritual realms.

See also: **fēi**.

ghaybah (A), **ghaybat** (P) *Lit.* absence; also, being concealed; from the same root as *al-Ghayb* (the Unseen) and *ghāba* (to be or to remain absent); in a Sufi context, absence from self; absence of the heart from all thoughts and inclinations concerning this world; absence from all affections other than for God; absence of the heart from this world through being present with God; also, absence from God due to mental distraction; also used by the Twelve-*Imām Shīʿahs* for the state of the 'hidden' twelfth *Imām,* who is believed to exist in the Unseen state of being, and who will come again at the end of the world. A similar belief is held by the Druzes concerning the Fāṭimid Caliph, al-Ḥākim (*d.*1021 CE), in whose name the Druze sect was founded and to whom they look for salvation. There are similar beliefs by other Muslim groups concerning their particular saviours.

Javād Nūrbakhsh explains the Sufi perspective:

> In *ṣūfī* terminology, there are two kinds of absence *(ghaybat):* absence *(ghaybat)* from the creation and absence *(ghaybat)* from God. Absence *(ghaybat)* from the creation refers to the heart's being absent from what is other than God, where the *ṣūfī* becomes absent from himself and all else as the result of an infusion (of grace) which descends into his heart. Absence *(ghaybat)* from God refers to the state of dispersion and separation.
>
> *Javād Nūrbakhsh, Sufi Symbolism, FNI11 p.98, SSE11 pp.82–83*

In the case of absence from God, ʿIrāqī also observes, "Absence is said to refer to the station *(maqām)* of duality,"[1] while Tahānawī says much the same, "Absence *(ghaybah)* is said to represent the station *(maqām)* of multiplicity."[2]

Sufis commonly twinned *ghaybah* with *ḥuḍūr* (presence), a term implying either the presence of God or the presence of what is other than God. Shāh Niʿmat Allāh Valī says that duality dissolves in the presence of God, when the Sufi becomes absent even from absence – when individual consciousness, even of being absent from the self, is lost:

In the early stages, absence *(ghaybat)* is from conventions and habits, while in the final stages, it is from absence *(ghaybat)* itself, due to the falling away of duality in presence *(ḥażrat)* with God.

Shāh Niʿmat Allāh Valī, Rasā'il, RNV4 p.180, in SSE11 p.83

Hujwīrī discusses the two terms at some length:

The terms, absence *(ghaybat)* and presence *(ḥużūr)* although apparently opposed to each other, express the same meaning from different viewpoints.

Presence *(ḥużūr)* is presence *(ḥużūr)* of the heart, as a proof of intuitive faith *(yaqīn),* so that what is hidden from it has the same force as what is visible to it. Absence *(ghaybat)* is absence *(ghaybat)* of the heart from all things except God to such an extent that it becomes absent *(ghā'ib)* from itself and absent *(ghā'ib)* even from its absence *(ghaybat),* so that it no longer regards itself; and the sign of this state is withdrawal from all formal authority… Accordingly, absence *(ghaybat)* from one's self is presence *(ḥużūr)* with God, and *vice versa.* God is the lord of the human heart: when a divine rapture overpowers the heart of the seeker, the absence *(ghaybat)* of his heart becomes equivalent to its presence *(ḥużūr)* (with God); partnership and division disappear, the relationship to self comes to an end.…

So long as you are absent *(ghā'ib)* from yourself, you are present *(ḥāżir)* with God face to face, but when you became present *(ḥāżir)* with your own attributes, you became absent *(ghā'ib)* from your proximity to God. Therefore: "Your presence *(ḥużūr)* is your perdition." …

Presence *(ḥużūr)* is the fruit of absence *(ghaybat),* but what light is to be found in absence *(ghaybat)* without presence *(ḥużūr)?* A man must needs renounce heedlessness in order that, by means of this absence *(ghaybat),* he may attain to presence *(ḥużūr);* and when he has attained his object, the means by which he attained it has no longer any worth.

The absent *(al-ghā'ib)* one
is not he who is absent *(ghāba)* from his country,
but he who is absent *(ghāba)* from all desire.
The present *(al-ḥāḍir)* one is not he who has no desire,
but he who has no heart (for worldly things),
so that his desire is ever fixed on God.…

To be present *(ḥużūr)* with God is to be absent *(ghaybat)* from one's self. What is the difference? And one who is not absent *(ghā'ib)* from himself is not present *(ḥāżir)* with God.

Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb XIV, KMM pp.319–22; cf. KM pp.248–51

Al-Qushayrī relates a number of stories to exemplify the meaning of absence:

> Absence *(ghaybah)* can entail a person being absent from his own sense faculties because of what is disclosed to him from the Real, Most High and All-Praised. People vary in degrees of absence *(ghaybah)* according to their stages. There is a famous story about how Abū Ḥafṣ al-Nīshābūrī, the blacksmith, came to give up his craft. He was at his smith shop when someone recited a verse from the *Qur'ān.* There came upon the heart of Abū Ḥafṣ an inrush *(wārid)* that made him disregard his own senses, so that he put his hand into the fire and took out – in his bare hand – the glowing iron. One of his apprentices saw what was happening and said: "Master, what's this!" Abū Ḥafṣ considered what had come over him, gave up his craft, and left his shop.
>
> Once Junayd was sitting in the company of his wife. Shiblī came in to visit, and his wife wished to veil herself. Junayd said to her: "Shiblī is not aware of you. Stay seated." Junayd continued speaking to Shiblī until Shiblī began to weep. At that point, Junayd said to his wife: "Veil yourself. Shiblī has awakened from his absence." …
>
> As for presence *(ḥuḍūr),* a person might be present to the Real because when he is absent from creatures, he is present to the Real – that is, it is as if he were present. His heart is seized by remembrance of the Real so that he is present with his heart before the Real. His presence *(ḥāḍir)* to the Real is in proportion to his absence *(ghaybah)* from creatures. If he is totally absent *(ghā'ib)* from creatures, he will be totally present *(ḥāḍir).*
>
> If someone says: "So-and-so is present," he means that he is present *(ḥāḍir)* with his heart before his Lord, constant in his remembrance of Him, not heedless or inattentive of Him. Then, in His presence, according to his station, the veil is parted for him for whatever the Real, Most Praiseworthy and Most High, has chosen him.
>
> It can also be said in regard to the return of the servant to his senses, to the states of his self, and to the states of creatures, that he is present – that is, he has returned from his absence *(ghaybah).* This is presence *(ḥuḍūr)* to creation. The former kind of presence *(ghaybah)* is presence *(ghaybah)* to the Real.
>
> People's states can differ in the degree of absence *(ghaybah).* For some, the absence *(ghaybah)* does not endure. For others, the absence *(ghaybah)* is continual.
>
> It is related that Dhū al-Nūn al-Miṣrī sent a man from his circle to Abū Yazīd to report back to him about Abū Yazīd's circumstance. The man came to Bisṭām, asked directions for the house of Abū Yazīd, and went to visit him there. Abū Yazīd said: "What do you want?"
>
> The man said: "I want Abū Yazīd."

He replied: "Who is Abū Yazīd? Where is Abū Yazīd? I am seeking Abū Yazīd myself."

The man departed, saying to himself: "He's mad."

When the man returned to Dhū al-Nūn and reported what he had seen, Dhū al-Nūn wept and said: "My brother Abū Yazīd has gone the way of those departed to God."

Al-Qushayrī, Risālah, RQQQ pp.40–41; cf. in EIM pp.122–24

The Sufi poets have characteristically put things in a simple and pithy manner:

The master of the path said,
"O stalwart, by being away from yourself, be close to Him,
and by absence *(ghaybat)* from yourself,
be present *(ḥāżir)* with Him.
He, glorious in His glory,
is neither away from those to whom He is the intention,
nor hidden from those who seek Him,
nor absent *(ghā'ib)* from devotees.

Anṣārī, in Kashf al-Asrār, KA5 p.384, in FLI p.612

If you come with your self, you will not fit in His lane:
to find His face, become lost to your self!
As long as you are close to your self,
these words will not apply to you:
You must come to be absent *(ghaybat),*
if you wish to be present *(ḥużūr).*

Mīr Ḥusaynī Hirawī, in FNI11 p.100; cf. in SSE11 p.84

See also: **ḥuḍūr**.

1. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLRI* p.93, in *SSE11* p.83.
2. Tahānawī, *Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn, KIFT3* p.388, in *SSE11* p.83.

gila (He) *Lit.* bliss, joy. See **bliss (in Judaism)**.

gnōsis (Gk) *Lit.* knowledge, gnosis; specifically, revealed knowledge of spiritual truths or inner mysteries; the innate knowledge of the soul and higher mind, gained through deep contemplation and spiritual practice; knowledge and direct experience of God and the higher realms of being or consciousness; awareness of the soul's own innate light; direct inner perception or understanding; contrasted with the limited knowledge acquired

through reason, exertion of the intellect, and analysis of sensory experience; a fundamental feature of the gnostic and Hermetic teachings of early Christian times.

Clement of Alexandria distinguishes human wisdom from true *gnōsis* when he writes that although *gnōsis* may impart human wisdom *(sophia),* it is essentially different in nature. *Gnōsis* is beyond the sphere of words and human teaching:

> Knowledge *(gnōsis)* differs from wisdom *(sophia),* which is the result of teaching. For as far as anything is knowledge *(gnōsis),* so far is it certainly wisdom *(sophia);* but in as far as anything is wisdom, it is not certainly knowledge *(gnōsis).* For the term wisdom appears only in the knowledge of the uttered word.
>
> *Clement of Alexandria, Miscellanies 7:10; cf. WCA2 p.446*

The highest *gnōsis* is the direct knowledge, experience or realization of God, deemed in gnostic texts to have been taught by Jesus. Hence, in the *Pistis Sophia,* Jesus tells his disciples:

> The *gnōsis* of the Ineffable is that of which I have spoken with you today.
>
> *Pistis Sophia 255:101; cf. PS pp.510–11, PSGG p.212*

The source of *gnōsis* is the

> true Word, that through *gnōsis* teaches us the hidden knowledge of the Lord Jesus, the Living One.
>
> *First Book of Jeu 41:3, BC pp.8–9*

Thus, says Jesus, according to the *First Book of Jeu:*

> He that hears the Word of *gnōsis* has ceased to have the mind of a man of earth, but has become a man of heaven. His mind has ceased to be earthly, but has become heavenly.
>
> *First Book of Jeu 42:3, BC pp.10–11*

The gnostics believed that mystic or gnostic teachings are contained in the Bible, but are not always so easily understood. In a gnostic variant of a well-known gospel saying,[1] Jesus says that purely religious interpreters of the Bible do not really understand what they are reading. Yet, at the same time, by insisting on the correctness of their interpretations and by forbidding others to entertain alternative interpretations, they prevent real seekers of God from understanding it:

> Jesus said:
> "The Pharisees and the scribes have taken
> the keys of *gnōsis* and hidden them.
> They themselves have not entered,
> nor have they allowed to enter those who wish to."
>
> *Gospel of Thomas 40:39, NHS20 pp.68–69*

The author of the *Gospel of Philip* quotes John's gospel when he observes that a soul who has attained the highest *gnōsis* is free from the burden of sin:

> He who possesses *gnōsis* of the Truth is free, and he who is free does not sin; for "he who sins is the slave of sin."[2]
>
> *Gospel of Philip 77; cf. GS p.348, NHS20 pp.196–97*

According to the opening of the *First Book of Jeu,* Jesus came for the sole purpose of teaching the *gnōsis* of God (God-realization) by means of the divine *Logos:*

> I have loved you, and longed to give you Life: the living Jesus, who knows the Truth. This is the book of the *gnōseis* (pl.) of the invisible God, by means of which all hidden mysteries are revealed to the elect.... The living Jesus is the saviour of souls, the *Logos* of Life, sent by the Father from the light world to mankind, teaching his disciples the one and only doctrine, saying: "This is the doctrine in which all *gnōsis* dwells."
>
> *First Book of Jeu 39:1; cf. BC pp.4–5, FFF p.518*

Gnōsis starts with self-knowledge or self-realization, and culminates in God-realization (*gnōsis* of God):

> The beginning of perfection is the *gnōsis* of man, but the *gnōsis* of God is perfected perfection.
>
> *Naassene Document, Refutation of All Heresies V:3, TGH1 p.147; cf. RAH p.146*

The Hermetic texts say the same:

> God does not ignore man; on the contrary, He knows him fully, and wishes to be known. For man, this is the only salvation – *gnōsis* of God. This is the ascent to Olympus.
>
> *Hermetica 10:15; cf. HAG p.81, HGCH p.33, TGH2 p.150*

And:

> This is the consummation for those who have gained *gnōsis* – to be made one with God.
>
> *Hermetica 1:26; cf. HAG p.53, HGCH p.6, TGH2 pp.16–17*

And the way to achieve this is through the *Nous,* the divine Intelligence or creative power:

> I myself, the *Nous,* am present with the holy, and the good and pure and merciful men who live piously, and my presence is a help to them, and they quickly attain *gnōsis* of all things, and win the Father's love by their pure lives, and give Him thanks,... intent on Him with ardent love.
>
> *Hermetica 1:22; cf. HAG p.52, HGCH p.5, TGH2 p.14*

See also: **gnostic** (7.1), **Gnosticism** (1.6), **knowledge**.

1. *Luke* 11:52; *Matthew* 23:13.
2. *John* 8:34.

God-realization The state of consciousness of a soul that has completely merged back into God; the highest level of spiritual enlightenment; commonly associated with the teachings of Indian *sants* (saints) and mystics, such as Nāmdev, Ravidās, Ramakrishna, and others.

The term seems to make its first appearance in literature published by the Ramakrishna Mission, and has since been used by various mystical teachings originating in India. It conveys the same meaning as *brahmajñāna* and *brahmavidyā,* both generally translated as 'knowledge of *Brahman*'.

Though the term 'God-realization' is of recent origin, the underlying spiritual ideal is ancient. Even Orphic tablets, dating from the earliest days of Greek civilization, speak of man becoming God. One such tablet reads: "Hail, you who have suffered the suffering.... From man, you have become God," while another says: "O happy and blessed one, you will be God instead of mortal."[1]

Whether Orpheus was an actual or a mythical person, the body of teachings associated with his name gave a spiritual dimension to the worship of *Bacchus* that was prevalent in those times, making it ascetic, and substituting physical intoxication for the spiritual. Orphic doctrine included transmigration of the soul and a belief that the purpose of human life was purification. Human beings are understood to be part earth and part heaven, and the goal of life is for the soul to become one with *Bacchus,* as the supreme Deity, experiencing the ecstasy of union with the Divine. The soul could then be called a Bacchus, and be freed from birth and death.

See also: **divine man** (7.1), **self-knowledge**.

1. *Orphic Tablets* XI:a.III, V; *cf. PSGR* pp.583, 585.

gotrabhū-ñāṇa, **gotrabhū-citta** (Pa) *Lit.* knowledge *(ñāṇa)* or thought *(citta)* of one who has overcome the heritage *(gotrabhū);* in Buddhism, the knowledge, wisdom or insight of one who has overcome or changed the ancestry, lineage, heritage *(gotra)* or habit of the *puthujjanas* (worldly ones) and has entered the heritage of the *ariya-puggalas* (noble people), having enlightenment *(nibbāna)* as his goal; maturity knowledge; the insight of one who has consciously broken the mould or habit of worldliness and is firmly established on the spiritual path.

A *gotrabhū* is a spiritually mature seeker who – whether monk, nun or layperson – is no longer a *puthujjana* (worldly person), but has become an *ariya* (noble one), having *nibbāna* as his primary goal. According to the commentary to the *Puggala Paññatti* ('Designation of Individuals'):

> He who through perceiving *nibbāna,* leaves behind the whole multitude of worldlings *(puthujjanas),* the family of worldlings, the circle of worldlings, the designation of a worldling and enters into the multitude of the noble ones, the family of the noble ones *(ariyas),* the circle of the noble ones, and obtains the designation of a noble one – such a being is called a *gotrabhū.*
>
> *Puggala Paññatti Aṭṭhakathā 1:1, in "gotrabhū," PBD*

Gotrabhū appears in a general sense in the Pali texts for a member of the monastic community, where the term receives no further explanation.[1] However, it is taken up and receives an elaborate analytical treatment in the *Abhidhamma* and other commentaries and analytical texts. According to this analysis, four moments of consciousness – variously described as thought impulses, thought moments, moments of transition, or sudden insights *(javanas)* – are experienced immediately before entering the first *jhāna* (meditative absorption, contemplative state). These four sudden insights or moments of consciousness are:

Parikamma (attending, being present; preliminary thought), which is a preparation for the higher supramundane or transcendental consciousness.

Upacāra (proximity; moment of access), which arises in proximity to the supramundane or transcendental consciousness.

Anuloma (not contrary; moment of conformity or acceptance), which harmonizes the preceding and ensuing thought moments, harmonizing the lower mind *(citta)* with the higher mind.

Gotrabhū (overcoming, maturity), which severs connection with the mundane world and links to the higher supramundane or transcendental path that leads to *nibbāna.* In the process of spiritual evolution, there is moment of insight in which a person realizes that his higher goal is indeed *nibbāna.* This insight is known as *gotrabhū-ñāṇa* or *gotrabhū-citta.* It is that knowledge *(ñāṇa)* or thought *(citta)* that overcomes the worldly heritage or habit, and is often called 'maturity knowledge'. At this point, the individual is ready to enter the transcendental or supramundane *(lokuttara)* or noble *(ariya)* path *(magga),* with its four stages: stream-enterer *(sotāpanna),* once-returner *(sakadāgāmī),* non-returner *(anāgāmī),* and noble or enlightened one *(arahanta). Gotrabhū-ñāṇa* is followed by *magga-ñāṇa* or *magga-citta,* the moment of consciousness at which the meditator enters the supramundane path *(lokuttara-magga).*

The mundane *(lokiya)* stage of the path begins when the seeker sets out to develop virtue, concentration, and wisdom. It culminates when these qualities have been developed to such a degree that he sees the three primary characteristics of mundane existence as they really are: impermanence *(anicca);* suffering *(dukkha);* and having no permanent, unchanging self or personal identity *(anattā).* The seeker is now ready to embark upon the supramundane *(lokuttara)* or transcendental stage of the journey, leading ultimately to *nibbāna.* At this point, he is said to have entered the 'stream' that leads to *nibbāna,* and is hence known as a stream-enterer *(sotāpanna).* Each of the four stages of the supramundane path represents the conquest or shedding, to an increasing degree, of all the fetters *(saṃyojanas),* defilements *(āsavas)* and impurities *(kilesas)* that bind sentient beings to the cycle of birth and death.

Buddhaghosa classifies *gotrabhū-ñāṇa* as a form of *ñāṇa-dassana visuddhi* (purification of directly perceived knowledge), which he describes as the seventh and last *visuddhi* (purification) to be developed on the path to liberation. This last *visuddhi* is divided into four categories: the stream-enterer, the once-returner, the non-returner, and the noble or enlightened one.[2] In his discussion of the subject, Buddhaghosa adds that "*gotrabhū-ñāṇa* is only able to make *nibbāna* its object, but it is unable to dispel the murk that conceals the truths."[3] That is, the insight establishes the monk upon the path with a clear understanding of the goal, but it does not of itself remove all the impurities and impediments of the mind that still obscure the desired vision.

The relationship between entry into the *jhānas* and entry to the supramundane path is not entirely clear among the various texts, and there are

some contradictions. A number of twentieth-century Buddhist writers have concluded, however, that entry to the supramundane path is either the same as entry into the first *jhāna* or *rūpaloka* (world of forms, patterns, or archetypes) or that entry to the supramundane path is not possible without having attained the first *jhāna.* The discrepancies probably arise from the attempt to overlay two descriptions of spiritual ascent.[4]

There are many ways in which meditative experience can be classified, and there are several other classification schemes that include *gotrabhū-ñāṇa.* Frequently mentioned in present times in the context of what is called *vipassanā* meditation are the sixteen (or seventeen, depending on how they are counted) *vipassanā-ñāṇas* (insight-knowledge) that evolved in the early *Theravāda* tradition. Absent from the Pali *suttas,* they are discussed in various places in Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga.* The *vipassanā-ñāṇas* are preliminary forms of insight-knowledge, which lead the practitioner from awareness of the distinction between mind and body, the relationship between the two, the impermanence of physical and mental phenomena, and so on, through to *gotrabhū-ñāṇa* (the fourteenth stage) as the conscious affirmation of the desire to follow the spiritual path to its culmination; and finally into the supramundane or transcendental path that leads to *nibbāna.*[5]

See also: **javana**, **ñāṇa-dassana visuddhi** (▸4), **vipassanā-ñāṇa**.

1. *E.g. Anguttara Nikāya* 10:16, *Āhuneyya Sutta, PTSA5* p.23; *Anguttara Nikāya* 9:10, *Āhuneyya Puggala Sutta, PTSA4* p.373; *Majjhima Nikāya* 142, *Dakkhiṇā Vibhanga Sutta, PTSM3* p.256.
2. Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 22, *PTSV* pp.672–75.
3. Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 3:22, *PTSV* p.673, *PPVM* p.702.
4. See *e.g.* Soma Thera, "Contemplation in the Dhamma," in *PFVM* pp.353–62; Kheminda Thera, *Path, Fruit and Nibbāna, PFNK;* L. Cousins, "Origin of Insight Meditation," in *BF4* p.48.
5. Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 20–22, *PTSV* pp.606–97.

guī, **wūguī** (C) *Lit.* turtle, tortoise; an auspicious symbol of longevity or eternal life; one of a number of animal metaphors in Chinese and Daoist mythology.

Among a collection of extraordinary stories and strange legends in *Xuánzhōngjì* ('Stories from the Centre of Mystery'), attributed to the Daoist master Guō Pú (C4th), it is said that a turtle which reaches the age of one thousand years is able to communicate with human beings. One that reaches the age of five thousand years is called a *shénguī* (divine turtle), and a ten-thousand-year-old turtle is called a *língguī* (spiritual turtle).

See also: **chángshēng**.

guṇasthāna (S/H) *Lit.* virtue, attribute *(guṇa)* + place, stage, position *(sthāna);* level or stage of virtue; in Jainism, the fourteen stages of spiritual development traversed by the soul on the road to spiritual liberation; the fourteen rungs to be climbed on the ladder to salvation.

Jain philosophy divides the path to spiritual salvation *(moksha)* into fourteen stages through which a soul must progress, from the lowest stage of delusion to the stage of enlightenment achieved only momentarily at the time of death before passing into *videhamukti* (incorporeal liberation) or *nirvāṇa,* the everlasting state of complete liberation from *karma.* Since a soul can rise and fall on the spiritual path, the fourteen stages are of both ascent and descent.

Karma, in the form of particles of subtle matter, is regarded as the main obstruction to spiritual understanding and the liberation of the soul. The influx of these particles into the soul is caused by likes and dislikes, which bring about attractions and repulsions, which in turn facilitate the influx of the resultant karmic particles. Moral and ethical practices such as *ahiṃsā* (non-injury) and *aparigraha* (non-possession) are intended to stop the influx of karmic matter, while spiritual practices such as fasting and meditation are intended to assist in the egress and ultimately the elimination of old karmic matter. This can only happen if an individual is able to drive out all feelings of attraction and repulsion, and to live life according to the prescribed five great vows (*mahāvratas,* for mendicants) or five lesser vows (*aṇuvratas,* for laypeople).

The fourteen *guṇasthānas* correspond to a gradual lightening of the karmic load, until the soul is completely liberated and achieves omniscience *(kevala-jñāna).* The fourteen stages are elucidated in the *Samavāyānga Sūtra,* the *Shaṭkhaṇḍāgama* ('Six-Part Scripture'), and in the works of Kundakunda and other Jain writers. In this context, *dṛishṭi* means view, viewpoint, belief, or faith. They are:[1]

1. *Mithyā-dṛishṭi guṇasthāna. Lit.* stage of illusory *(mithyā)* viewpoint *(dṛishṭi);* the stage of either complete unbelief or a distorted understanding of the spiritual path; the lowest stage. Here, due to the effect of all twenty-eight forms of *mohanīya karma* (deluding *karma*), the soul has no inkling of the right path to salvation. It remains in the grip of the passions, of rituals and false doctrines, of a one-sided view of things, of doubt and uncertainty, and of spiritual ignorance *(ajñāna).* The individual has sufficient understanding, to a greater or lesser extent, to function as a human being, but the degree of understanding is determined by the burden of *karma* that is carried. Some souls (*abhavya,* incapable) are destined to remain in this condition for all time; others (*bhavya,* capable) will one day attain liberation. A soul may have never risen above this stage, or it may have fallen from a higher stage. But the primal cause of this state is the effect of *mohanīya karma.* From this stage, the soul rises to the fourth

stage, rather than the second or third, which are stages experienced during descent to the first *guṇasthāna.*

2. *Sāsvādana samyag-dṛishṭi guṇasthāna. Lit.* stage of having had a taste *(sāsvādana)* of the right viewpoint *(samyag-dṛishṭi);* a momentary, transitional stage in which the soul has had a taste or recollection of the higher stage, yet is falling again to the first stage. The soul has risen to the higher stage due to the suppression of *mohanīya karma,* but falls again due to its remanifestation. It is a stage of hesitation before succumbing once again to the *mithyā-dṛishṭi guṇasthāna,* the stage of mistaken understanding and belief.

3. *Samyag-mithyā-dṛishṭi guṇasthāna. Lit.* stage of right *(samyag)* + illusory *(mithyā)* viewpoint *(dṛishṭi);* a state in which the soul entertains a mixture of true and false beliefs, arising from the incursion of *mohanīya karma* while at the fourth stage; a stage of doubt, confusion and indecision, of struggle between right and wrong; a transitional stage experienced as the soul falls from a higher stage, back to *mithyā-dṛishṭi guṇasthāna.*

4. *Avirata samyag-dṛishṭi guṇasthāna. Lit.* stage of right viewpoint *(samyag-dṛishṭi)* without *(a-)* discipline *(virata);* the stage where the soul begins to glimpse the spiritual truth, knowing right from wrong, but nonetheless lacks the willpower and spiritual strength always to follow what is right and to take any vows. From here, the soul may proceed higher or fall again to a lower stage due to the incursion of suppressed *karma.* Having reached this stage, a soul is assured of attaining liberation *(moksha)* or *nirvāṇa* one day, though it may take a very long time.

5. *Deshavirata samyag-dṛishṭi guṇasthāna. Lit.* stage of partial observance *(deshavirata)* and right viewpoint *(samyag-dṛishṭi);* the stage in which a soul has gathered sufficient spiritual strength to persevere on the spiritual path and to take the lesser vows *(aṇuvratas),* yet still lacks full self-control. This stage is regarded as the highest stage attainable by a layperson or householder. Beyond this point, the individual must adopt asceticism and renunciation of the world in order to proceed further.

6. *Pramatta-saṃyata guṇasthāna. Lit.* negligent *(pramatta)* self-controlled *(saṃyata)* stage; the stage in which the soul has renounced the world, taken the vows (*mahāvratas,* great vows) of a *sādhu* and leads a disciplined life, yet remains inclined towards negligence or inattentiveness *(pramāda)* in observing the vows due to a lingering attachment to the body; a stage of self-control with spiritual inertia; also called *sarva-virata* (full observance) *guṇasthāna.*

7. *Apramatta-saṃyata guṇasthāna. Lit.* non-negligent *(apramatta)* self-controlled *(saṃyata)* stage; the stage in which the soul has full control over the passions, has no attachment to the body, and observes the *mahāvratas* without negligence.

8. *Apūrva-karaṇa guṇasthāna. Lit.* stage of unprecedented *(apūrva)* attainment *(karaṇa);* the stage in which the soul gains a previously unprecedented degree of purity and spiritual strength, and for the first time experiences spiritual bliss and tranquillity, and is little affected by emotions, although some subtle imperfections and instincts still remain. This is the first of the truly contemplative stages. Further progress is made by following the *dharma* (right way of life) and practising the *shukla dhyānas* (pure-spirit contemplations).

9. *Anivṛitti-karaṇa guṇasthāna. Lit.* stage of non-eradication *(anivṛitti)* attainment *(karaṇa),* in which the soul reaches a high degree of purity, but where there is a danger of it being affected by the non-eradication of gross passions through the ingress of *mohanīya karma,* despite having the power to control them. If the soul allows itself to be so affected, it will regress to a lower stage.

10. *Sūkshma-sāmparāya guṇasthāna. Lit.* stage of transition *(sāmparāya)* to what is subtle *(sūkshma);* in which the soul has attained a high degree of purity, and has eliminated the most subtle passions *(kashāyas)* and secondary passions *(nokashāyas),* with only a subtle form of greed *(lobha)* remaining (understandable as a lingering unconscious attachment of the soul to the body), due to subtle traces of *mohanīya karma.*

11. *Upashānta-moha guṇasthāna. Lit.* stage of suppressed *(upashānta)* delusion *(moha),* in which all passions including subtle greed are temporarily suppressed. However, because *mohanīya karma* still remains in a suppressed form, and because suppression is not the same as eradication, it is still likely that the passions will awaken once more, even taking a soul down to the first stage once again, depending upon the kind of *karma* affecting the soul.

12. *Kshīṇa-moha guṇasthāna. Lit.* destruction *(kshīṇa)* of delusion *(moha)* stage, where delusion and its cause, *mohanīya karma,* are finally destroyed, along with all other forms of *karma* except *aghātiyā* (secondary, harmless) *karma* – the *karma* of the present lifetime – thus removing the primary obstacle *(karma)* to spiritual progress. The soul is now no longer in danger of falling to the lower stages, and proceeds to the thirteenth stage.

13. *Sayogi-kevali guṇasthāna. Lit.* oneness *(kaivalya)* together with vibration or activity *(sayoga)* stage, in which all passions have been destroyed and all *karma* has been eliminated except *aghātiyā karma,* which still remains, keeping the soul bound to the body for as long as the *karma* of the present lifetime has not ended; identified with the *jīvanmukti* (liberation while living) of the *Upanishads.*

14. *Ayogi-kevali guṇasthāna. Lit.* oneness *(kaivalya)* without vibration or activity *(ayoga)* stage, in which the remaining *karma* that keeps the soul in the body is destroyed, and the soul attains liberation, no longer bound by *karma* and the body, and free from the risk of further incarnation. This state is said to last only momentarily, after which the soul rises to its heavenly abode *(siddhaloka, īshat-prāgbhārā-bhūmi),* which is above all the heavenly realms, at the very pinnacle of the occupied universe *(lokākāsha),* where the soul dwells for all eternity in the blissful experience of its own consciousness.

1. See *Jain Philosophy and Practice, JPP2* pp.211–17; Sagarmal Jain, *Introduction to Jain Sadhana, IJSJ* pp.66–72.

gupt(a) bhed(a) (S/H/Pu) *Lit.* hidden *(gupt)* secret or mysteries *(bhed);* hidden knowledge, mystic knowledge, the inner mysteries; a general term for mystic knowledge which, by its nature, is hidden from normal consciousness. Charandās advises:

> Keep this hidden secret *(gupt bhed)* in your heart:
> do not speak of it to any foolish person.
> *Charandās, Bānī 1, Gyān mati varnaṇ 1, CDB1 p.27*

Swami Shiv Dayal Singh writes:

> I have revealed the hidden secrets *(gupt bhed)*
> that only the devotees of a master would understand.
> *Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 26:4.6, SBP p.228*

And:

> The soul reaches the *mahā sunn*
> and acquires the hidden knowledge *(gupt bhed)* of it.
> *Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 26:3.6, SBP p.227*

guru jñāna (S), **guru gyān** (H/Pu), **gur giān** (Pu) *Lit.* knowledge *(jñāna, gyān)* of the *guru; guru's* wisdom; the mystic knowledge of which a *guru* is aware and which he can convey to others; hence, *guru gyānī,* one to whom the *guru* has revealed this knowledge. Guru Amardās says:

> The *guru* has applied
> the true ointment of spiritual wisdom *(gur giān)* to my eyes.
> Deep within, the divine light has dawned,
> and the darkness of ignorance has been dispelled.
> My light has merged into the Light:
> my mind has surrendered,
> and I am blessed with glory in the court of the Lord.
>
> *Guru Amardās, Ādi Granth 124, AGK*

Bhīkhā Sāhib therefore advises:

> Walk the path of Truth,
> avoiding falsehood and hypocrisy.
> Always remain engrossed in *guru gyān,*
> and so invoke His *dhyān* (vision of his inner form).
>
> *Bhīkhā, Shabdāvalī, Upadesh 1:2, BSSB p.7*

gǔshén (C) *Lit.* valley *(gǔ)* spirit *(shén);* a metaphor, first found in the *Dàodé jīng* (*c.*C3rd BCE), for the timeless, hidden, spiritual power that enlivens all creation, the spiritual essence and energy of one's own being; more generally, a metaphor for spiritual awareness.

In his commentary on *Wùzhēn piān* ('Treatise on Awakening to Reality'), master Liú Yīmíng (1734–1821) explains that the *gǔshén* is the Source of all things and the primordial awareness that is known by many names. It can be experienced, but not grasped:

> The valley spirit *(gǔshén)* is the one Energy *(yīqì)* of the primeval Void *(xūwú).* It is what is called the spiritual embryo (*shèngtāi,* inherent spiritual potential and awareness). This Energy is neither material nor empty, yet it is both material and empty. Within undifferentiated abstruseness *(huǎnghū)* and indiscernible profundity *(yǎomíng),* you look for it but cannot see it, listen for it but cannot hear it, try to grasp it but cannot hold it. It touches the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* and the human mind *(rénxīn);* it is the root of true (mystical) knowledge and reflected knowledge; it is the origin of strong feeling *(i.e. yáng)* and soft nature *(i.e. yīn).* It creates heaven, earth, and human beings.

> Confucians call it the Great Ultimate *(tàijí),* the Ultimate Good *(zhìshàn),* or the Ultimate Truth *(zhìchéng).* Buddhists call it complete awareness *(yuánjué,* S. *pūrṇabuddha),* the spiritual body *(fǎshēn,* S. *dharmakāya),* or the (true) relic *(shèlì,* S. *sharīra)* of the Buddha. Daoists call it the gold elixir *(jīndān)* or the spiritual embryo *(shèngtāi)* or the valley spirit *(gǔshén).* In reality, it is the true consciousness and true potential inherent in human beings, the spirit that manifests in an empty valley *(kōnggǔ).*
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17*

As the "one Energy of the primeval Void", the valley spirit is the origin of all created things. Though not the Void itself, it contains within itself, in harmonious union, the duality of *yīn* and *yáng* (negative and positive, respectively), and it is through the interplay of *yīn* and *yáng* that all transient things come into existence, are sustained, and pass away. Additionally, it is through the merging of *yīn* and *yáng* within oneself that the valley spirit can be known.

The valley spirit is the "deathless" source of everything. A valley is formed from the empty space (which is *yīn,* receptive) between the mountains (which are *yáng*) that rise up on either side. Both are required to make a valley, just as *yīn* and *yáng* arise from each other. The valley spirit is also called the "mysterious female *(xuánpìn)*" from which all things are born. *Pìn* ("female") also means valley, and is used in the *Dàodé jīng* to emphasize the quality of *yīn. Xuán* ("the mysterious") is understood to be *yáng,* so *xuánpìn* is again a union of *yīn* and *yáng:*

> The valley spirit *(gǔshén)* is deathless,
> and is called the mysterious female *(xuánpìn).*
> The gateway of the mysterious female *(xuánpìn zhī mén)*
> is the source of all creation.
> Appearing to exist uninterruptedly,
> it functions inexhaustibly.
>
> *Dàodé jīng 6*

Liú Yīmíng explains:

> The "mysterious" is *yáng;* it is firmness and strong feeling. The "female" is *yīn;* it is the soft and yielding nature. When there is both firmness and yielding, the valley spirit *(gǔshén)* lives forever, and the solid foundation of immortality is established. The valley spirit *(gǔshén)* is produced from the joining of the two crescent energies *(yīn* and *yáng),* with the firm *(i.e. yáng)* and the yielding *(i.e. yīn)* perfectly united *(zhōngzhèng).*
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17*

In Daoism, the full moon represents 'completeness' or 'wholeness', and 'crescent' signifies incompleteness. So with the union of the "two crescent energies *(yīn* and *yáng)*", the spirit becomes 'complete' or 'whole'. On the other hand, when the valley spirit becomes enmeshed in human existence, *yīn* and *yáng* become separated and awareness of the valley spirit is lost:

> When this valley spirit *(gǔshén)* descends into human life, *yīn* and *yáng* are completely separated. The false is acted upon; the Truth is pushed aside; and the valley spirit *(gǔshén)* is buried as if dead. To cultivate the gold elixir *(jīndān),* it is necessary to revitalize this valley spirit *(gǔshén).* To revitalize the valley spirit *(gǔshén),* it is first necessary for *yīn* and *yáng* to be evenly mixed. If *yīn* and *yáng* are not in union, the valley spirit *(gǔshén)* cannot manifest.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17*

It is through the union of *yīn* and *yáng,* the transcendence of duality, that the "one Truth", the "valley spirit" that is always present, becomes manifest and true mystic knowledge or gnosis is experienced. Using the colourful and often enigmatic imagery of Daoism, Liú Yīmíng continues:

> When the crescents (of *yīn* and *yáng*) join in undifferentiated abstruseness *(huǎnghū)* and indiscernible profundity *(yǎomíng),* there is something. It is called the essence of the one Truth *(zhēnyī),* which is also another name for the valley spirit *(gǔshén).* Without refinement, it appears unexpectedly and quickly disappears; then it is called the true essence *(zhēnjīng).* With refinement, it becomes established and does not disappear; then it is called the valley spirit *(gǔshén).*
>
> When the true essence returns to the room of yellow gold *(huángjīn shì),* and the essence of oneness *(jīngyī)* returns to the centre, then the valley spirit *(gǔshén)* manifests. When the valley spirit *(gǔshén)* manifests, the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn)* is constantly present and the human mind *(rénxīn)* is submissive and yielding. True knowledge *(zhēnzhī)* and reflected knowledge *(língzhī)* merge. The valley spirit is truly conscious, truly adept, in undifferentiated primeval order, silent and still, its perception unimpeded and universally penetrating. With unimpeded and universally penetrating perception, it is silent and still, always adaptive, always at rest.
>
> A ray *(kē)* of spiritual light *(língguāng)* is never separate (from its source – it only seems so). When (one realizes that) the spiritual light *(língguāng)* is never separate, that is the immortal valley spirit *(gǔshén).* This is what the author (of *Wùzhēn piān*) is referring to when he says, "When you have swallowed a drop *(lì)* of the gold elixir *(jīndān),* then you will know that your life (inner being) does

> not depend on (your outer) destiny." The valley spirit *(gǔshén),* the true essence *(zhēnjīng),* and the spiritual light *(língguāng)* are one and the same. The only difference is whether or not they are developed. Students should know that these are not three different things.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17*

Master Liú Yīmíng refers to the manifestation of the true self (the valley spirit) as the spiritual embryo *(shèngtāi)* – a metaphor for the essential, original spiritual essence and awareness within oneself and at the heart of all things. This awareness arises from the harmonizing of *yīn* and *yáng.* The pearl-like "grain of millet *(lìshǔ)*" also signifies the initial stages of spiritual enlightenment. Like a seed, the spiritual embryo grows when nurtured:

> The inherent Energy *(xiāntiān zhī qì)* comes from the Void *(xūwú).* It manifests like a pearl *(zhū),* like a grain of millet *(lìshǔ):* "The spiritual embryo *(shèngtāi)* is revealed." The spiritual embryo *(shèngtāi)* is the valley spirit *(gǔshén).* The valley spirit *(gǔshén)* means that spirit which is mystery (*xuán,* positive) and female (*pìn,* negative) joined as one. The *yáng* mystery is the tiger – strong feeling. The *yīn* female is the dragon – (soft and yielding) nature. When (soft and yielding) nature and strong feeling join, the spiritual embryo *(shèngtāi)* forms. Once the mysterious female *(xuánpìn)* is found, the valley spirit *(gǔshén)* is born. On reaching this point, doing and non-doing (*wúwéi,* unforced, selfless, and desireless action) manifest. It is no longer necessary to contrive, but rather to leave all to nature. It is like fruit growing on a tree: it will ripen in due course. The child in the belly will eventually be born.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17*

In another work, *Dispelling Doubts on Symbolic Language,* Liú Yīmíng takes another approach to the symbolism associated with *gǔshén.* Here, the valley is likened to the mind which, being intrinsically empty, absorbs and echoes thoughts and images within itself. Only when those thoughts and images have been stilled does the mind become truly conscious, and able to manifest its innate spiritual light. If the mind is full of thoughts, its attention is absorbed by those thoughts and is not fully conscious:

> The valley spirit *(gǔshén)* is the spirit of the empty valley, the valley between two high mountains. When people shout into it, the valley echoes the sound. That is one of the reasons why it is called the valley spirit *(gǔshén).*
>
> In cultivation of the *Dào (xiūdào), gǔshén* is used as an analogy for the spirit *(shén)* within the human body that is empty and conscious

> *(xūlíng).* This is because only when the mind is empty, can it be (truly) conscious *(líng).* When the mind is not empty, it cannot be (truly) conscious *(líng).* Consciousness *(líng)* arises from emptiness, which is why it is also called the valley spirit *(gǔshén).*
>
> Spirit *(shén)* means being formless, shapeless, conscious, and unfathomable. The phrase 'silent and still, perception unimpeded and universally penetrating' refers to this spirit. The phrase 'manifesting the spiritual embryo *(shèngtāi)*' also refers to this spirit. . . .
>
> When the mysterious female *(xuánpìn)* is merged in the centre, then the spirit is empty. When it is empty, then true consciousness *(zhēnlíng)* is constantly present and never obscured. True essence *(zhēnjīng),* spiritual light *(língguāng)* and the valley spirit *(gǔshén)* are all metaphors for the same one true consciousness *(zhēnlíng).*
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Xiàngyán pòyí, ZW247, DS14*

Emptiness and the valley spirit are frequent themes in Liú Yīmíng's teachings. To be truly conscious, the valley spirit must be empty. In *Wùdào lù* ('Record of Awakening to *Dào*'), he writes:

> A call in an empty *(kōng)* valley *(gǔ)* echoes on. (This echo) is commonly called the valley spirit *(gǔshén).* It is because it has sound but no form that it is called the spirit of the valley *(gǔ zhī shén).*
>
> As I observe this, I realize that this is the way *(dào)* of nurturing the spirit *(shén)* in emptiness *(xū).*
>
> If a person can become empty *(xū)* at the inner centre, this is the valley *(gǔ).* Within the emptiness *(xū)* at the centre is concealed a drop of spiritual energy *(língqì).* This is the spirit *(shén).*
>
> This valley *(gǔ)* is silent and still; perception is unimpeded and universally penetrating. Only the valley *(gǔ)* empowers the spirit *(shén).* If there is no valley, there is no spirit. The subtlety of the spirit lies in the valley *(gǔ).*
>
> Worldly people are full of egoistic desires that clog up the spiritual opening *(língqiào).* They are soiled in a hundred different ways. How can they become the valley *(gǔ)?* Without the valley *(gǔ),* they are utterly deluded and unconscious, as if intoxicated or dreaming. With their spiritual energy *(língqì)* dispersed, how can they possess the spirit *(shén)?* With the spirit *(shén)* lost, they are alive but as if dead.
>
> If you can truly sweep away all attachments, clear all accumulated blockages, and become naked without any covering, then the empty *(kōng)* valley *(gǔ)* will automatically manifest. It is undifferentiated and abstruse *(huǎnghū),* having both substance and essence *(jīng).* It is spirit beyond spirit, responsive to every call, the highest spiritual consciousness *(líng).* Externally, it pervades creation; internally,

> it withdraws and conceals itself, flowing thereby throughout both heaven and earth.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùdào lù, ZW268, DS18*

The *Dào* is the source and essence, the original nature, of all created things. In human beings, it exists in the form of the spirit. Hence, the spirit (one's original nature, the true self) is also referred to as *gǔshén:*

> Remain still in the yellow hall *(huángtíng)* and nurture the valley spirit *(gǔshén).*
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Dānfā èrshísì jué 20, in Jīndān sìbǎi zì jiě, ZW266, DS12*

Master Liú Yīmíng is referring to stilling the body and mind in meditation. Yellow is associated with the centre and is also the colour of gold, which symbolizes the spirit. So the "yellow hall" or "yellow court" is the spiritual centre of a human being.

In a scripture said to have been transmitted spiritually to master Sūn Bù'èr (C12th), Yuánshǐ Tiānzūn (one of the highest deities in the Daoist pantheon) tells Tàishàng Lǎojūn (the deified Lǎozǐ in religious Daoism) that the fundamental thing that people should learn from his teachings is to still the mind. Based on such a firm foundation, their practice will surely lead to union of the spirit with its source and essence, the *Dào:*

> You must teach the people first to practise stillness of the mind. When the mind is still, the life energy *(qì)* is still. When the life energy is still, the spirit *(shén)* is whole. When the spirit is whole, one's entire being *(xíng)* is stable *(gù),* constant, and ceaselessly present – its profound function revealed. When in union with the true Ancestor *(zōng, i.e. Dào),* the valley spirit *(gǔshén)* does not die.
>
> *Yùqīng tāiyuán nèiyǎng zhēnjīng,*
> *in Sūn Bù'èr yuánjūn chuánshù dāndào mìshū, ZW371, JY204*

Using alchemical symbolism, Liú Yīmíng says that when, through spiritual practice, the scattered energies of *yīn* and *yáng* – of imperfect human nature – have been purified, turned around, brought within, and 'added to the crucible' of the practitioner's inner focus of being, then that inner centre becomes full of pure energy. Further inner progress then takes place beyond the duality of *yīn* and *yáng*. Then the spiritual embryo of the true self develops into an immortal being – the "valley spirit", "the mysterious female *(xuánpìn)*" – that permeates heaven and earth:

> The method of reversion and restoration is to add the *yáng* fire when it is time for *yáng – i.e.* to collect true (spiritual) knowledge *(zhēnzhī);*

> and to add the *yīn* fire when it is time for *yīn – i.e.* to nurture true knowledge. When the *yīn* and *yáng* energies have been fully purified and brought within, then the five elements *(wǔxíng)* merge and transform. Then your true knowledge and true potential appear, and you become silent and still, your perception unimpeded and universally penetrating. Then, automatically, you are with the (original) spirit.
>
> The spirit is something that cannot be measured in terms of *yīn* and *yáng* (*i.e.* duality). That which is immeasurable by *yīn* and *yáng* and manifests the spiritual embryo *(shèngtāi)* is called 'the ever-living valley spirit *(gǔshén)*'. The ever-living valley spirit *(gǔshén)* is called 'the mysterious female *(xuánpìn)*'. The gateway of the mysterious female *(xuánpìn zhī mén)* is called 'the root of heaven and earth'.[1] When the *yīn* and *yáng* energies have been fully purified and brought within, the mysterious female *(xuánpìn)* is found. When the mysterious female *(xuánpìn)* is found, the valley spirit *(gǔshén)* flows in and out of the gateway of the mysterious female *(xuánpìn zhī mén),* living forever, never dying.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17*

The "gateway of the mysterious female" is the point of transition between material and spiritual existence, from which material existence comes into being.

See also: **xuánguān** (8.2), **xuánpìn** (8.2).

1. *Cf. Dàodé jīng* 6.

gyān (H/Pu) See **jñāna**.

hadhayān (A), **haźayān** (P) *Lit.* talking nonsense, vain talk; delirium; in Sufism, the uncontrolled outward expression of ecstasy, regarded as a mark of spiritual immaturity. Writing of al-Qushayrī, Hujwīrī says:

> I have heard that he said: "The *ṣūfī* is like the disease called *birsām,* which begins with delirium *(haźayān)* and ends in silence; for when you have attained stability *(tamakkun)* you are dumb." Sufism has two sides: ecstasy *(wajd)* and visions *(numūd).* Visions belong to novices, and the expression of such visions is delirium *(haźayān).* Ecstasy belongs to adepts, and the expression of ecstasy, while the ecstasy continues, is impossible. So long as they are only seekers, they utter lofty aspirations, which seem delirium *(haźayān)* even to those who

> aspire. But when they have attained, they cease, and no longer express anything either by word or sign.
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb XII, KMM pp.209–10; cf. KM p.167*

Here, *tamakkun,* synonymous in Sufi terminology with *tamkīn,* refers to the utter stability and composure of a soul that has arrived at union with the Divine.

ḥāḍir (A), **ḥāżir** (P) *Lit.* present, aware; having presence of mind, being present right now, right here, with collected attention; also, being present with God; from the same root as *ḥuḍūr* (presence) and *ḥaḍrat* (presence):

> When the Friend of God (Abraham) looked at the kingdom of heaven, and meditated on the reality of its existence, his heart was made present *(ḥāżir)* thereby; through beholding the act, he became a seeker of the Agent; his presence *(ḥużūr)* made the act a proof of the Agent, and in perfect gnosis he exclaimed: "I turn my face with true belief unto Him who created the heavens and the earth."[1]
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb XXIV, KMM p.487, KM p.373*

Rūmī says that only by seeking God's presence can a person be purified. In His presence, impurities are illuminated, and many seekers, becoming aware of their own impurity, shy away from the awareness of His presence, feeling that they are unworthy. But Rūmī points out that there is no other way to be "cleansed". Here, the "Pool *(Ḥawż)*" is the *ḥawż-i Kawśar, Kawśar* being a mythical spring or river of divine grace bestowed upon Muḥammad, which is mentioned in the *Qur'ān* and *ḥadīth.*[2] Rūmī uses it in reference to the Living Water or Water of Life, the divine creative power that purifies a soul of its accumulated sin:

> An unrespectful person who is present *(ḥāżir)*
> is better than one who is absent *(ghā'ib).*
> Though the ring be crooked, is it not on the door?
> O defiled in body, frequent the Pool *(Ḥawż):*
> outside the Pool *(Ḥawż),* how can a man be cleansed? …
> The purity of this Pool *(Ḥawż)* is infinite:
> the purity of bodies is of little weight.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī II:1360–63; cf. MJR2 p.291*

See also: **ghaybah**, **ḥaḍrah** (8.5), **ḥuḍūr**.

1. *Qur'ān* 6:79.
2. *Qur'ān* 108:1; *e.g. Ḥadīth Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* 6:60.488.

hakushi (J) *Lit.* white paper, blank paper; metaphorically, a clean state of mind, like pure white paper free of writing or blemishes; a state of mind that is perfectly free of all mental activities, resulting from the practice of *zazen* (sitting meditation); a prerequisite for attaining enlightenment *(bodhi).*

The metaphor was favoured by the Japanese *Zen* master Hakuun Ryōko Yasutani (1885–1973). Concerning the practice of *zazen,* he counsels:

> As long as there is anything written, recorded, or pictured in your head or heart, you can't find any enlightenment. Throw everything away. Your mind must be as empty and spotless as a piece of white paper – *hakushi.*
>
> *Hakuun Ryōko Yasutani, in "hakushi,"*
> *in Encyclopedia of Eastern Philosophy and Religion, EEPR p.124*

ḥāl (A/P) (pl. *aḥwāl*) *Lit.* state, condition; situation, circumstance; related to the Arabic *ḥāla* (to change, to be transformed); in Sufism, a term for a transitory or spontaneously occurring experience, feeling or state of consciousness, particularly one of a mystical or ecstatic nature, including spiritually oriented moods. In Sufi literature, the passing nature of *ḥāl* is commonly defined and clarified by contrasting it with the more permanent *maqām* (station).

Sufis have given various definitions. All are agreed that states arise spontaneously. Depending upon the particular state and the depth of its intensity, the activities of the lower mind, the ego or individual self may also go into abeyance while the state lasts. When they again become active, the state recedes. If it does not recede, then the state has become permanent – a *maqām.* Some states (such as joy) are passing moods, others (such as flashes of inner light) are brief mystical experiences. For some, there is no single English word that will serve as a translation. *Ḥuzn,* for instance, is a bittersweet sorrow, the sadness and yearning of a soul seeking spiritual progress, sorrowful at its failings and yearning for the Divine. The restlessness *(inziʿāj, nā-ārāmī)* and need *(iḥtiyāj)* of a soul that is separated from the Divine are aspects of the longing to know God. *Basṭ* (expansion) and *qabḍ* (contraction) refer to the opening and closing of the heart, to the ups and downs of spiritual life:

> Literally, state *(ḥāl)* denotes the end of the past and the beginning of the future. From the point of view of the people of God, however, it is a spiritual experience that happens to the heart, without the heart's claiming to possess it or seeking to acquire it, whether it be rapture *(ṭarab),* bittersweet sorrow *(ḥuzn),* contraction *(qabḍ),* expansion *(basṭ),* or awe *(haybah).* With the re-emergence of the attributes of the *nafs* (lower mind), it disappears, whether to be followed by another

state *(ḥāl)* similar to it or not. Whenever it lasts, becoming permanent, it is known as a station *(maqām).* States *(aḥwāl)* are gifts, while stations *(maqāmāt)* are acquired. The former comes from the wellspring of God's generosity, while the latter are attained through effort and spiritual striving *(mujāhadah).*

Jurjānī, Taʿrīfāt, KTJ p.79; cf. in SSE8 pp.84–85

(Ḥāl) is what comes into the heart purely gratuitously, without any effort or invitation – in the form of bittersweet sorrow *(ḥuzn),* fear of God *(khawf),* expansion *(basṭ),* contraction *(qabḍ),* yearning *(shawq),* or tasting of the Divine *(dhawq).* When it appears, the characteristics of the self *(nafs)* go into abeyance; the state *(ḥāl)* itself may or may not do likewise; but if it endures and becomes a permanent characteristic, then it is called a station *(maqām).*

Al-Qāshānī, Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Ṣūfīyah 114, GSTA p.35; cf. GST p.26

Among the people of God, the state *(ḥāl)* is a mode of consciousness that comes upon the heart without a person's intending it, attracting it, or trying to gain it – a feeling of delight *(ṭarab)* or bittersweet sorrow *(ḥuzn),* contraction *(qabḍ),* longing *(shawq),* restlessness *(inziʿāj),* awe *(haybah),* or need *(iḥtiyāj).* States *(aḥwāl)* are bestowed; stations *(maqāmāt)* are attained. States *(aḥwāl)* are freely given, while stations *(maqāmāt)* are gained with effort. The possessor of a station *(maqām)* is secure in his station *(maqām),* while the possessor of a state *(ḥāl)* can be removed from his state *(ḥāl).*

Al-Qushayrī, Risālah, RQQQ p.34; cf. in EIM p.103

Mystical states are described as divine gifts:

Mystical states *(aḥwāl)* are gifts that come as manifestations of emanating grace to the wayfarer from his Lord. The gift comes either as a reward for righteous action, through purification of the *nafs* and heart, or through God's grace.

Shāh Niʿmat Allāh Valī, Rasāʾil, RNV4 p.8, in SSE8 p.88

They are prompted by the awakening of spiritual consciousness, resulting from meditation of one kind or another:

Mystical states *(aḥwāl)* arise from the heart's spiritual practice; they are that which descend upon the heart from the fruits of remembrance *(dhikr).*

Abū al-Najīb Suhrawardī, Ādāb al-Murīdīn,
AMNS p.76, AMNA p.23, in SSE8 p.89

States are especially common among novices who have yet to attain inner stability. Their purpose is understood to be that of divine encouragement. However, Sufis have also understood such states to be expressions of the lower mind, and it is difficult for a novice to distinguish the one from the other:

> In *ṣūfī* terminology, however, a state *(ḥāl)* is an inrush or inspiration *(wārid)* that descends into the heart of the wayfarer involuntarily and spontaneously. It comes as a result of spiritual practice, litanies, and remembrance *(dhikr).* It may manifest in the form of joy (P. *shādī,* A. *ṭarab*) or bittersweet sorrow (P. *andūh,* A. *ḥuzn*), expansion *(basṭ)* or contraction *(qabḍ),* yearning *(shawq),* restlessness *(nā-ārāmī),* and so forth.
>
> As its name implies, a mystical state *(ḥāl)* is not fixed, but subject to change, although it lasts for a period of time. Mystical states *(aḥwāl)* that are brief, passing quickly, have various names, such as flashes *(lavā'iḥ),* illumination *(ṭawāliʿ)* and effulgence *(lawāmiʿ),* and are particular to novices, to whom such states *(aḥwāl)* occur as they come closer to the heart. Though the sun of gnosis has yet to dawn for them, God nourishes their hearts with such quickly passing states *(aḥwāl).* In other words, while the firmament of the novice's heart is still dark with the clouds of personal pleasures, God causes the warm brilliance of these states *(aḥwāl)* to be sustained for the novice from time to time. They serve as lamps lighting the path ahead, encouraging the wayfarer on his way.
>
> In fact, it would be more appropriate to call experiences like luminous manifestations and effulgence preliminaries to states *(aḥwāl),* rather than states *(aḥwāl)* themselves. In some cases, *ṣūfī* masters, in using the term mystical state *(ḥāl),* have really meant these preliminaries, which pass quickly. One such master is Abū al-Ḥasan Ṣā'igh, quoted by Qushayrī as saying, "Mystical states are like lightning. If they abide, they are not states, but rather occurrences of the *nafs* (lower mind) or adjuncts of one's physical nature."[1]
>
> In other cases, masters of the path have actually meant mystical state *(ḥāl)* when using the term, namely, a true state *(ḥāl)* which lasts for a period of time.
>
> *Javād Nūrbakhsh, Sufi Symbolism, FNI8 p.259; cf. SSE8 pp.83–84*

Sufis themselves differ as to what is a state and what is not. They have also distinguished between states and stations:

> The distinction between a state *(ḥāl)* and a station *(maqām)* – both these terms are in common use among *ṣūfīs,* and it is necessary that the student should be acquainted with them. . . .

> Station *(maqām)* denotes anyone's standing in the Way to God, and his fulfilment of the obligations appertaining to that station *(maqām)* and his keeping it until he comprehends its perfection so far as lies in a man's power. It is not permissible that he should quit his station *(maqām)* without fulfilling the obligations thereof. Thus, the first station is repentance *(tawbat),* then comes conversion *(inābat),* then renunciation *(zuhd),* then trust in God *(tavakkul),* and so on: it is not permissible that anyone should pretend to conversion without repentance, or to renunciation without conversion, or to trust in God without renunciation.
>
> State *(ḥāl),* on the other hand, is something that descends from God into a man's heart, without his being able to repel it when it comes, or to attract it when it goes, by his own effort. Accordingly, while the term station denotes the way of the seeker, and his progress in the field of exertion, and his rank before God in proportion to his merit, the term state *(ḥāl)* denotes the favour and grace that God bestows upon the heart of His servant, and which is not connected with any mortification on the latter's part. Station belongs to the category of acts, state *(ḥāl)* to the category of gifts. Hence, a person's station *(maqām)* is founded upon the degree to which he has eliminated his self, whereas when a person has experienced a state *(ḥāl),* he becomes dead to himself, and is founded upon the state *(ḥāl)* that God has created in him.
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb XIV, KMM pp.224–25; cf. KM pp.180–81*

However, there is no complete agreement as to where the line between the two should be drawn:

> Here, the *shaykhs* are at variance. Some hold that a state *(ḥāl)* may be permanent, while others reject this view. Ḥārith Muḥāsibī maintained that a state *(ḥāl)* may be permanent. He argued that love *(maḥabbat)* and longing *(shawq)* and contraction *(qabḍ)* and expansion *(basṭ)* are states *(ḥāl):* if they cannot be permanent, then the lover would not be a lover, and until a man's state *(ḥāl)* becomes his attribute *(ṣifat)* the name of that state *(ḥāl)* is not properly applied to him. . . .
>
> Other *shaykhs* deny that a state *(ḥāl)* can be permanent. Junayd says: "States *(aḥwāl)* are like flashes of lightning: their permanence is merely a suggestion of the lower soul *(nafs).*" Some have said, to the same effect: "States *(aḥwāl)* are like their name," *i.e.* they vanish almost as soon as they descend *(taḥillu)* on the heart. Whatever is permanent becomes an attribute, and attributes subsist in an object which must be more perfect than the attributes themselves; and this reduces the doctrine that states *(aḥwāl)* are permanent to an absurdity.
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb XIV, KMM pp.225–26, KM pp.181–82*

Ultimately, the intention is to rise above both states and stations, and to reach a place where the mind and consciousness are always stable:

> All the *shaykhs* of this path are agreed that when a man has escaped from the captivity of stations *(maqāmāt),* and gets rid of the impurity of states *(aḥwāl),* and is liberated from the abode of change and decay, and becomes endowed with all praiseworthy qualities, he is disjoined from all qualities. That is to say, he is not held in bondage by any praiseworthy quality of his own, nor does he regard it, nor is he made self-conceited thereby. His state *(ḥāl)* is hidden from the perception of intelligences, and his time is exempt from the influence of thoughts.…
>
> You must know that the Way to God is of three kinds: (1) *maqām,* (2) *ḥāl,* (3) *tamkīn* (fixity, steadfastness, composure). God sent all the prophets to explain the way and to elucidate the principle of the different stations *(maqāmāt).*… But if I were to enumerate every *ḥāl* and explain every *maqām,* my purpose would be defeated.
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb III, XXIV, KMM pp.38, 484–85, KM pp.33, 371*

Ibn al-ʿArabī observes that the differences of opinion among Sufis depends upon their individual experience:

> *(Ḥāl)* is something that comes to the heart purely gratuitously, without effort or invitation. One of its marks is that it disappears, its like following upon it time after time until it becomes pure. On occasion, its like may not come after it. From this originates the disagreement. He for whom the like is made to follow alleges its continuation; and he for whom the like is not made to follow alleges its lack of continuation. It is said to be impossible for the servant to describe *ḥāl.*
>
> *Ibn al-ʿArabī, al-Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Ṣūfīyah, ISMA p.55, WSNE p.91*

Mystical experience is the result of grace; yet the relationship between effort and grace is commonly discussed in the world's spiritual literature. Often, the recipient may not realize the source of the experiences, mistakenly interpreting divine encouragement for personal achievement:

> When He wants to show His grace to you,
> He creates states in you, and attributes them to you.
>
> *Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Illāh, Kitāb al-Ḥikam 12:123, HAAI p.66, BWIC p.77, SAKH p.41*

Sufis generally agree that stations can be acquired, and arise as a result of personal spiritual effort *(mujāhadah).* The goal of this striving is purification and self-conquest. The stations *(maqāmāt)* represents different virtues or different aspects of the battle to tame and train the *nafs* (lower mind). States

(aḥwāl), on the other hand, though their occurrence may be made more likely by effort, are spiritual moods and feelings over whose coming and going the seeker has no control:

> They (*aḥwāl,* states) descend from God into his heart, without his being able to repel them when they come or to retain them when they go.
>
> *Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj, Lumaʿ fī al-Taṣawwuf, KLTA p.42, in MOI p.29*

In Sufi terminology, a *ḥāl* is like a temporary unveiling *(jilwah)* of a bride. *Jilwah* comes from the same root as *tajallī,* which means a brief flash of illumination. The bride is the soul who desires to be alone with the spiritual king – the master or God. Hence, Rūmī writes:

> The *ḥāl* is like the unveiling *(jalvat)* of that beauteous bride,
> while the *maqām* is the (king's) being alone with the bride.
> The unveiling *(jalvat)* is witnessed by the king and by others as well,
> but at the time of solitude,
> there is no one except the mighty king.
> The bride unveils before commons and nobles alike:
> in the bridal chamber the king is alone with the bride.
> There are many among the *ṣūfīs* who enjoy *ḥāl,*
> but he who has attained *maqām* is rare.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī I:1435–38; cf. MJR2 p.79*

The oft-repeated Sufi saying, "Mysticism is a matter of *ḥāl* not *qāl* (maxim, utterance)" is not mere wordplay. It is an attempt to emphasize that spirituality must actually be experienced, a change in consciousness must actually occur; new avenues of perception must actually open. Mysticism is not a matter of discourses, readings, or exercise of the intellect. Words are, at best, a very inadequate means of expressing mystical experiences. They only cast another veil over the mystery of existence.

On the other hand, Rūmī observes that neither *qāl* nor a passing state are the essence of true spirituality. Mystical experience has to become permanent:

> Would that Being had a tongue,
> that it might remove the veils from existent beings!
> O breath of existence, whatever words you may say about it,
> know that you have thereby bound another veil upon the mystery –
> that utterance *(qāl)* and state *(ḥāl)*
> are the bane of spiritual perception:
> To wash away blood with blood is absurd, absurd.

Since I am a confidante of His yearning ones,
day and night I am breathing secrets
in the cage of phenomenal existence.
Rūmī, Maśnavī III:4725–28; cf. MJR4 p.263

Here, Rūmī uses *ḥāl* for the "state" in which the seeker expends his energy in talking about spirituality rather than striving for his own spiritual uplift. But there is a twist in the tale, for Rūmī admits that since he himself is actually familiar with the ecstasy of the inner realms, in spite of himself he breathes forth the secrets of love in the cage of this world!

Sometimes, the Sufi poets have put things in a straightforward manner. In the *dīvān* of Ḥāfiẓ, the *mughannī* (minstrel) is the spiritual master who makes divine music play within the soul:

Follow that path whereby a *ṣūfī*
may enter the mystic state *(ḥāl):*
Whereby intoxication *(mastī)* and union *(waṣl)*
may be given to him.
O minstrel! Play your music –
take from my heart the thought of this mean world.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.277, DIH p.478; cf. DHWC (687:9) p.993

And Saʿdī points out, like many other mystics, before and since:

You may be assured that the ignorant fellow
who derides our states *(aḥwāl)* (of ecstasy)
has never in all his life experienced one.
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 186:5, KSMF (634) p.898; cf. BOS p.203

Aḥwāl are divine gifts, of many varieties, and cannot be rigidly categorized. Nonetheless, the Muslim fondness for systematization has led to a number of different lists and descriptions of *aḥwāl* and *maqāmāt,* providing material for centuries of debate over their definition and the respective places of effort and grace on the spiritual path. In one of the earliest Sufi treatises, *Kitāb al-Lumaʿ fī al-Taṣawwuf* ('Book of Light on Sufism'), Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj (*d.*988 CE) lists ten such *aḥwāl:*[2]

1. *Murāqabah.* Watching, attentiveness, presence; hence, meditation; the ability to concentrate and be attentive to the spiritual reality.

2. *Qurb.* A feeling of nearness to God; stilling the wandering thoughts and inducing an awareness of God's omnipresence, within and without.

3. *Maḥabbah.* Love; a sense of inner warmth and divine bliss that draws the soul away from the senses towards the inner Reality.

4. *Khawf.* Fear of God, fear of divine retribution.

5. *Rajā', Rajā'fī Allāh.* Hope, hope in God; positive faith and trust in His protection and guidance.

6. *Shawq.* Longing, yearning; specifically, for spiritual realization and union with the master and God.

7. *Uns.* Joy, intimacy, familiarity; a sense of ease in the presence of the Divine, stemming from a loss of self-consciousness and awareness of Him.

8. *Iṭmi'nān* or *Iṭmī'nān.* Confidence and reliance, arising from a forgetfulness of self and an awareness that God knows what He is doing and is the only Doer; hence also, tranquillity.

9. *Mushāhadah.* Witnessing, contemplation, contemplative vision; beholding the divine vision; the desire for meditation and the state of mind which takes to spiritual exercises.

10. *Yaqīn.* Certainty that the spiritual path is real and that one's perceptions and understanding are correct. Such certainty can only come from mystic experience. Just as a person who has awakened from a dream understands that the dream was unreal, without the need for thought or analysis, so does the one who has mystic experience of a higher Reality know that it is real, whatever anyone else may say, and that by comparison the physical world is a dream.

The same writer lists seven stations *(maqāmāt),* each – except the first – being the result of the one before:[3]

1. Repentance *(tawbah)*
2. Watchfulness, self-control, or abstinence *(waraʿ)*
3. Renunciation, asceticism *(zuhd)*
4. Poverty *(faqr)*
5. Patience *(ṣabr)*
6. Trust in God *(tawakkul)*
7. Satisfaction *(riḍā')*

Here it can be seen that even virtues are included among the *aḥwāl* and *maqāmāt,* because Sufis regard virtues such as patience or trust as modes

of inner being rather than external characteristics. They also emphasize that the goal is to reach the station of annihilation in God, who dwells beyond all states and virtues.

See also: **maqām**.

1. Al-Qushayrī, *Risālah, RQQQ* p.27.
2. Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj, *Lumaʿ fī al-Taṣawwuf, KLTA* pp.53–70, *KLT* pp.16–20, in *MOI* p.29.
3. Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj, *Lumaʿ fī al-Taṣawwuf, KLTA* pp.13–16, 43–51, *KLT* pp.5, 13–14, in *MOI* pp.28–29.

hamah man am (P) *Lit.* I *(man)* am *(am)* all *(hamah)* that exists; an expression of the realization of union with the Divine and that nothing exists except him; also called 'true or real faith *(ḥaqq al-īmān)*'. ʿInāyat Khān says:

> In the end, all culminates in one belief, *hamah man am,* that is, 'I am all that exists'; and all other beliefs are preparatory for this final conviction, which is called *ḥaqq al-īmān* in the Sufi terminology.
>
> *ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK1 p.57*

He also explains that *hamah man am* signifies the same as Christ's saying, "I and my Father are one":[1]

> Christ said, "I and my Father are one." That does not mean that Christ laid claim to Godhood for his own person. It is what the dervishes call *hamah man am,* which means all is He and He is all. There is not an atom in the universe that He is not. We must recognize Him, we must respect Him in every face, even in the face of our enemy, of the most worthless. Knowing that all is God by reading a few books on philosophy is not enough; our pity and our spirituality are valueless if we do only this.
>
> *ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK6 p.88*

See also: **ahaṃ Brahmāsmi** (5.1), **anā al-Ḥaqq**, **hamah ūst**, **subḥānī**, **Tat tvam asi** (5.1).

1. *John* 10:30, *KJV.*

hamah ūst (P) *Lit.* all *(hamah)* is He *(ūst);* He is everything; everything is God; a Sufi expression meaning that God is in everything, and nothing exists that

is other than Him. He is the one Being, the divine Oneness within whom everything exists. He is both transcendent and immanent.

Although the expression was popularized by Ibn al-ʿArabī (*d.*1240) and his later followers, the same assertion was used by earlier Sufis such as ʿAṭṭār (*d.*1220).[1]

Following Ibn al-ʿArabī, some Sufis maintained that the reality is actually *hamah az ūst* (all is from Him) or *hamah bidūst* (all is through Him). According to Ibn al-ʿArabī, both are correct.[2] Long before him, however, Sufi analysts had tried to explain how the One can be in the many and the many in the One, giving rise to a wealth of literature in the attempt to define the nature of oneness *(tawḥīd).* Al-Sarrāj (*d.*988 CE) summarizes these efforts when he says that the divine oneness defies explanation, "and if one enters into explanation and expression, then Its splendour becomes hidden and disappears".[3]

And likewise ʿIrāqī:

> The world but seems to be, yet is nothing more
> than a line drawn between light and shadow.
> Decipher the message of this dream-script,
> and learn to distinguish time from eternity.
> Break the code of this line and know beyond doubt
> that all is nothing, nothing.
> All is He *(hamah ūst),* all is He *(hamah ūst).*
>
> *ʿIrāqī, Divine Flashes 14, RLRI pp.47–48, DF p.98*

Therefore, Anṣārī concludes: "Happy is he whose banner reads 'All is He *(hamah ūst)*'"![4]

See also: **ahaṃ Brahmāsmi** (5.1), **anā al-Ḥaqq**, **hamah man am**, **subḥānī**, **Tat tvam asi** (5.1).

1. *E.g.* ʿAṭṭār, *Muṣībat-Nāmah, MNFA* p.223.
2. See L. Lewisohn, *Heritage of Sufism, HSL2* p.205.
3. Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj, *Lumaʿ fī al-Taṣawwuf, KLT* p.31, in *MDI* p.148.
4. Anṣārī, *Song of the Dervish, BWIC* p.215.

ḥaqq al-yaqīn (A/P) See **yaqīn**.

hashva´ah (He) *Lit.* balance, equality, equanimity, indifference; union of opposites; a term first used by the early kabbalists to describe the quality of God that is beyond the duality of opposites; used later by the *Ḥabad ḥasidim* to refer

to the balance within an individual that arises from realizing the presence of the one divine Reality at all levels of existence, despite the apparent variety and plurality found in the manifested creation. Put succinctly, *hashva´ah* is mystic union with the One by transcending duality.

Hashva´ah is sometimes equated by scholars with the Neoplatonic concept of *coincidentia oppositorum* (coincidence or reconciliation of opposites in one unified whole) – the existence of light and dark, positive and negative, within one unity. This implies that the potential for opposites exists within the one Source of all existence: that the higher spiritual level that transcends duality, from which the lower creation is projected, contains within itself the potential for both positive and negative.

See also: **aḥdut**.

hasituppāda-citta (Pa) *Lit.* laughter-producing *(hasita-uppāda)* thought moment *(citta);* the smile-producing consciousness of the *arahanta;* the *citta* or *javana-citta* (impulsion thought moment) that underlies the smile and laughter of an *arahanta* (noble one, enlightened one) or *buddha,* which expresses itself as the bliss and joy that radiates from an enlightened being when he laughs or smiles; a notion implied in the Pali Buddhist *suttas,* in relation to the Buddha's smile; one of fifty-five *javana-cittas* enumerated in the *Abhidhammattha Sangaha* ('Compendium of *Abhidhamma*') of Anuruddha (*c.*C11th–12th).

Because the thought processes *(citta-vīthi),* thought moments *(cittakkhaṇa, citta)* and *javana-cittas* of an *arahanta* or *buddha* function independently of the kammic process, he creates no *kamma.* An *arahanta'*s thought moments are therefore known as *kiriyā* (functional, inoperative) *javanas* or *cittas,* since they possess no kammic force and create no new *kamma.* The *hasituppāda-citta* is therefore classed as a *kiriyā-citta.* Although human beings laugh and smile and enjoy other states originating in pleasant mental feelings *(somanassa-vedanā),* the rootless and inoperative *hasituppāda-citta* of the *arahanta* arises only in one who has achieved full realization of *nibbāna,* who has become free from impurities *(khīṇāsava).*

Since *arahantas* and other enlightened beings do not accumulate *kamma,* they experience neither *kusala-cittas* (wholesome mental states) nor *akusala-cittas* (unwholesome mental states). Their *kusala-cittas* are replaced by *kiriyā-cittas,* which may be *sobhana kiriyā-citta* (beautiful inoperative consciousness) or *ahetuka kiriyā-citta* (groundless or causeless inoperative consciousness).

The *Abhidhamma* texts enumerate multiple *cittas,* or categories and kinds of consciousness, covering all aspects of human conduct and emotion and all states of mind and consciousness, worldly and transcendental. In this respect, the *Abhidhamma* makes no distinction between mind and consciousness.

These *cittas,* which the *Abhidhammattha Sangaha* ('Compendium of *Abhidhamma*') of Anuruddha (*c.*C11th–12th) lists as eighty-nine in number, are divided into four overall classes. Those pertaining to the sphere of the senses *(kāmāvacara);* those pertaining to the realms of subtle forms, patterns, or archetypes *(rūpāvacara* or *rūpaloka);* those pertaining to the immaterial or formless realms *(arūpāvacara* or *arūpaloka);* and those pertaining to the transcendental consciousness experienced by those who have entered upon the supramundane *(lokuttara)* path, *viz.* the *sotāpanna* (stream enterer), *sakadāgāmī* (once-returner), *anāgāmī* (non-returner), and *arahanta* (noble one, enlightened one).[1]

Some *cittas* are associated with human emotions, wholesome and unwholesome, such as lovingkindness *(mettā)* and generosity *(dāna),* lust *(rāga)* and ill will *(dvesha), etc.* Some are connected to spiritual ignorance *(avijjā)* and delusion *(moha),* giving rise to various forms of wrong perspective or viewpoint *(mithyā-diṭṭhi).* Some deal with doubt *(vicikicchā),* the delusion that there is a separate self *(sakkāya-diṭṭhi),* and so forth. Several are associated with actions (killing, stealing, sexual misconduct), speech (lying, slandering, hard words, vain talk), and thought (greed, hatred, and wrong viewpoint). Others relate to the higher states of consciousness in *rūpaloka, arūpaloka,* and the supramundane path.

Among these are several forms of *citta* that are said to give rise to laughing and smiling, each *citta* depending upon the category of the individual and the circumstances giving rise to the mirth.[2]

A worldly person *(puthujjana)* will laugh or smile as a result of four forms of *citta* that are rooted in attachment and four forms that are rooted in four kinds of *kusala-citta* (wholesome consciousness), when any of these are accompanied by feelings of pleasure.

A *sotāpanna* (stream enterer), *sakadāgāmī* (once-returner) or *anāgāmī* (non-returner) may also smile as a result of either the four kinds of *kusala-citta* or the two kinds of *akusala-citta* (unwholesome consciousness), again when accompanied by pleasure.

Arahantas and *pacceka-buddhas* (non-teaching *buddhas* who attain enlightenment for themselves alone) may smile as a result of one of four *sobhana kiriyā-cittas* (beautiful inoperative consciousness) or due to *hasituppāda-citta.*

A *sammā-sambuddha* (perfectly enlightened one) may smile as a result of the four *sobhana kiriyā-cittas,* accompanied by wisdom and pleasure, or due to *hasituppāda-citta.*

While other *cittas* that result in laughter contain other emotions, wholesome or unwholesome, *hasituppāda-citta* is comprised of nothing but pure mirth and joy. This is readily seen when in the company of an enlightened being. Their smiles and laughter are pure, with no hint of any impurity or selfishness.

Six degrees of laughter are commonly mentioned in Buddhist texts, among which the descriptions vary:

> **1**. *Sita.* A smile manifesting itself in a blossoming of the eyes and cheeks, the teeth remaining hidden.
> **2**. *Hasita.* A smile including a slight movements of the lips, sufficient to reveal a little of the teeth.
> **3**. *Vihasita.* Laughter emitting a light sound, in which the teeth become visible.
> **4**. *Upahasita* or *avahasita.* Laughter accompanied by creasing of the eyes and widening of the nostrils.
> **5**. *Apahasita.* Laughter accompanied by tears and shaking of the shoulders, head, and arms.
> **6**. *Atihasita.* Hearty laughter accompanied by the rocking of the entire body backwards and forwards, from head to foot.[3]
>
> Laughter is thus a form of bodily expression *(kāyaviññatti),* which may or may not be accompanied by vocal expression *(vacīviññatti).* Of these, the first two classes are indulged in by cultured persons, the next two by the average man, and the last two by the lower classes of beings.
>
> *Shwe Zan Aung, Compendium of Philosophy; cf. CPAS p.22*

See also: **citta**, **cittakkhaṇa**, **javana**.

1. See Sayadaw U Thittila, *Essential Themes of Buddhist Lectures, ETBL* pp.263–67.
2. See Nārada Mahāthera, on *A Manual of Abhidhamma, ASAM* pp.47–48.
3. See *e.g.* Shwe Zan Aung, *Compendium of Philosophy, CPAS* p.22; Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu-bindu, SBRS* p.239.

haurvatāt (Av), **khordād** (Pv) *Lit.* wholeness, completeness, perfection, salvation; sometimes understood as good health, welfare, and complete well-being in this world; comparable to the Sanskrit, *sarvatātā;* one of the six *Ameshā Spentās,* the six primary aspects of *Ahura Mazdā.* In later Zoroastrianism, *Haurvatāt* is personified as a deity, the guardian of water.

In both the *Gāthās* of Zarathushtra and later Zoroastrian literature, *haurvatāt* is commonly twinned with *ameretatāt* (immortality), both being attained through devotional meditation or interior worship:

> By meditation *(Yasna)* and loving faith *(ārmaiti),*
> we shall rejoice in Him who, in His graciousness,

is known as Lord of Life *(Ahura)*
and Lord of all Creation *(Mazdā);*
For – by His Truth *(Asha),*
and through His First Mind *(Vohu Manah),*
and by His Power *(Xshathra)* –
Perfection *(haurvatāt)* and immortality *(ameretatāt)*
will bring spiritual strength *(tevīshī)* and life eternal *(utayūitī).*

Zarathushtra, Yasna 45:10; cf. DSZ

Of the verses concerning the prerequisites for attainment of *haurvatāt* and *ameretatāt,* there is one that uses a metaphor with some similarities to imagery found in the Indian *Kaṭha Upanishad.* In the *Gāthās,* Zarathushtra says:

This do I ask, *Ahura,* tell me true,
how shall I deserve, through *Asha* (Truth), that blessed reward? –
Ten mares led by a stallion and a camel *(ushtra)?*
Thus, O *Mazdā,* will I realize perfection *(haurvatāt)*
and immortality *(ameretatāt),*
and bring these gifts to humankind.

Zarathushtra, Yasna 44:18; cf. DSZ, GHZI

The somewhat comparable passage in the *Kaṭha Upanishad* reads:

Know the *ātman* (soul, self) to be the master of the chariot,
the body, the chariot,
the *buddhi,* the charioteer,
and the mind *(manas),* the reins.
The senses, they say, are the horses,
the sense-objects, the roads.
The *ātman,* associated with the body, the senses and the mind,
is – so say the wise – the enjoyer.

Kaṭha Upanishad 1:3.3–4, U1 p.148

Taking some help from the more complete imagery of the *Upanishad,* Zarathushtra is likening the ten basic material faculties (five senses, five motor faculties) to ten mares. The mind is symbolized by a stallion, leading and controlling his drove; and the soul is compared to a camel, a creature strong enough to lead the stallion. Both the Avestan and Sanskrit for a camel is *ushtra,* derived from or at least phonetically similar to the Sanskrit root *ush* (to burn, to shine). *Ushtra* may thus mean light or illumination, as in the name Zarath-ushtra. The use of the word camel *(ushtra)* to symbolize the soul may therefore be a wordplay, since it is the light or inner illumination of the soul that gives it control over the mind and senses. Either way, Zarathushtra

is saying that only when the soul controls the mind, and the mind the senses, is salvation or liberation possible.

Interestingly, a similar example is used by Plato in his parable of the divine and immortal soul as a winged charioteer led by two horses, one obedient, well-trained and of "noble stock", the other "the opposite in every way" – the two horses symbolizing human nature.[1] Plato (*c.*427–347 BCE) lived in a roughly similar era to both Zarathushtra (*c.*C10th–6th BCE) and the Buddha (*c.*563–483 BCE).

See also: **ameretatāt**.

1. Plato, *Phaedrus* 246a–54e.

hè (C) *Lit.* a crane (bird); a Chinese symbol for both wisdom and physical longevity; hence also, spiritual immortality or eternal life. In Daoist imagery, adepts who attain immortality *(xiān)* are said to ascend to heaven *(fēishēng)* riding on a crane *(qíhè).*

According to East Asian folklore, cranes live to 1,000 years of age – hence the crane's association with immortality. In works of art, the crane frequently appears together with a pine tree and a rock, both also symbols of longevity. Images of a crane flying towards a pavilion situated on a rock rising from the sea symbolically represent the flight of an immortal to the mythical Isles of the Immortals (Pénglái, Yíngzhōu, Yuánjiāo, Fāngchéng, and Dàiyú), situated at the eastern end of the Bóhǎi Sea.

See also: **báirì fēishēng**, **chángshēng**, **chénghè** (8.3), **fēi**, **qíhè** (8.3).

hé, **tiáo**, **tiáohé** (C) *Lit.* union, harmony, balance, unification *(hé);* to harmonize, to reconcile, to blend *(tiáo, tiáohé);* united, unified, harmonious *(tiáohé).* Daoism lays great emphasis on attaining and maintaining harmony in both the physical and the spiritual spheres, as well as in the specific context of spiritual practice.

In a Daoist's daily life, it is desirable to be in harmony with everything at all times – with people, with the environment, with the natural world, with the way things are. Daoists refer to the 'naturalization' of people, in the sense of integrating or reintegrating into the cyclical processes of nature. If human beings harmonize with these natural processes, they will return to the original "perfect harmony" that existed prior to the creation of the material world:

> All beings support *yīn* and embrace *yáng,*
> and the interplay of these two forces fills the universe.

> Yet, only at the still point between the breathing in and the breathing out
> can one capture these two in perfect harmony *(hé).*
>
> *Jonathan Star, on Dàodé jīng 42, TTCS p.55*

When human beings are born, each has a unique blend of *yīn* and *yáng*. After birth, the mind becomes conditioned by experience. It is through spiritual practice that Daoists work to create inner harmony between the many aspects of *yīn* and *yáng* that comprise their individual being. Attaining this harmony is key to attaining union with ('knowing') the *Dào:*

> To know harmony *(hé)*
> means to be in accord with the eternal *(cháng).*
> To be in accord with the eternal *(cháng)*
> means to be enlightened *(míng).*
>
> *Dàodé jīng 55, TTWC p.197*

A passage in the *Zhuāngzǐ* (*c.*C3rd BCE) speaks of the all-embracing nature cultivated by Daoist masters of earlier times. Their spiritual attainments, gained through practice and experience, were reflected in their harmonious nature and beneficence to "all under heaven":

> How complete was (the operation of the *Dào*) in the men of old! It made them the equal of spiritual beings, and as subtle and all-embracing as heaven and earth. They nourished all things, and produced harmony *(hé)* in all under heaven. Their beneficent influence reached all kinds of people.
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 33; cf. TT2 pp.215–16*

In the first and most significant commentary *(zhù)* on the *Zhuāngzǐ,* the Daoist mystic Guō Xiàng (C4th CE) discusses the harmonious aspect of *zìrán* (naturalness, spontaneity):

> Joy and sorrow result from gain and loss.
>
> A gentleman who profoundly penetrates all things and is in harmony *(hé)* with their transformations *(biàn)* will be contented with whatever time may bring. He follows the course of nature in whatever situation he may be. He will be quietly harmonized and united with creation. He will be himself, wherever he may be. Where do gain or loss, life or death, come in?
>
> Therefore, if he lets what he has received from nature take its own course, there will be no place for joy or sorrow.
>
> *Guō Xiàng, Nánhuá zhēnjīng zhùshū, DZ745 4:15b; cf. SBCP p.331*

By maintaining a state of harmony and remaining true to his inner nature, a Daoist "will be himself, wherever he may be" – whatever he may have to face. With a harmonious attitude towards life, he will remain relaxed and comfortable, flowing along with everything and everyone, however things may develop.

Adepts wishing to frequent the transcendent realms must remain in a state of harmony with both the spiritual and material worlds. Then they can access spiritual realms while carrying on their material life. Guō Xiàng continues:

> To cry as people cry is an aspect of the mundane world. To be aware of life and death, to forget joy and sorrow, and to be able to sing in the presence of a corpse is the perfection associated with the transcendent world. . . .
>
> The transcendent and the mundane worlds are in silent harmony with each other. There has never been a person who has roamed fully over the transcendent world, and yet was not silently in harmony with the mundane world; nor has there been anyone who was silently in harmony with the mundane world, and yet did not roam over the transcendent world. The sage . . . is automatically in accord with things.
>
> *Guō Xiàng, Nánhuá zhēnjīng zhùshū, DZ745 8:18a–20a; cf. SBCP p.333*

A short anecdote related in the *Book of Master Liè* observes that creatures have the ability to sense a disharmonious thought, even before it has been acted out:

> There was once a man, a sailor by profession, who was very fond of seagulls. Every morning he would go into the sea and swim about in their midst, at which time a hundred or more gulls would continuously flock around him.
>
> > TRANSLATOR'S COMMENTARY: Creatures are not shy of those whom they feel to be in mental and bodily harmony with themselves.
>
> One day his father said to him: "I am told that seagulls swim around with you in the water. I wish you would catch one or two for me to keep as pets."
>
> On the following day, the sailor went down to the sea as usual. But the gulls only wheeled about in the air and would not alight.
>
> > TRANSLATOR'S COMMENTARY: There was disturbance in the sailor's mind, causing a change in his outward demeanour; thus

the birds became conscious of the fact that he was a human being. How could their instinct be deceived?

Lièzǐ 2, DZ668; cf. BLTG pp.49–50

Harmony is rapidly lost when the mind is drawn to extremes, when mental balance is disturbed by the distractions of unnecessary desire or excessive emotion. By retaining balance of mind, one returns to "the true condition of the mind" (replacing the human mind with the mind of *Dào*). This is characterized by physical and mental calmness and composure. When this happens, harmony occurs naturally:

If you are able to cast off sadness, delight, pleasure, anger,
desire, and profit seeking,
your mind will just revert to equanimity.
The true condition of the mind
is that it finds calmness *(ān)* beneficial,
and, by it, attains repose.
Do not disturb it, do not disrupt it,
and harmony *(hé)* will naturally develop.

Nèiyè, in Guǎnzǐ (49) 16:1b–2a; cf. OTIT (3:6–11) p.50

Master Wáng Chǔyī (C13th) maintains that inner harmony, self-cultivation and spiritual cultivation bring physical benefits. By establishing inner serenity through cultivating (*i.e.* purifying) the mind, by developing the valley spirit *(gǔshén)* – the pure awareness that is empty of all thought and emotion – and by strengthening one's true or real nature *(zhēnxìng),* one can enhance the overall strength and well-being of the physical body. In a poem on the subject – written to a certain Wáng Yāsī who, because of an illness, had sought his master's advice – master Wáng Chǔyī maintains that Wáng Yāsī's spiritual practice will cure not only his present ailment, but also prevent future disease:

With care and perseverance,
nurture your harmony *(hé).*
Serenely cultivate your mind,
and depart from the river of desire.
Increase and augment your valley spirit *(gǔshén),*
never letting it dissipate.
Improve your blood circulation
and have no further illness.

The way in which the *Quánzhēn* (school) expounds the *Dào*
is to forget about birth and extinction.

Discover your (real) nature *(xìng),*
communicate with the spiritual *(líng),*
and be rid of obstructive demons.
Persistently seek the righteousness
that will gain you the merit that overcomes *karma,*
then ten thousand spirits will surround you
and lift you out of the world of suffering.
Wáng Chǔyī, Yúnguāng jí, DZ1152 1:3a–b; cf. in TPEQ p.169

Most of the disharmony between human beings stems from desire, self-oriented thoughts, and negative emotions of various kinds. *Unification of the Three,* a text from the *nèidān* (inner alchemy) tradition, is forthright concerning the need to remove all such impurities should one wish to attain the peace and "harmony *(tiáo)*" of the *Dào.* And the way to do this is to 'reverse the light (*fǎnzhào, i.e.* meditation)':

Practise reversion *(fǎn)* to experience the *Dào:*
submission is the key to attaining it.
Cultivate tirelessly and weed out all impurities *(wū):*
be humble and vigilant and attain unbroken attunement *(tiáo)*
(to the *Dào*) –
For in the mud lies the path to purity,
and in the long darkness a light will finally shine through.
Wèi Bóyáng, Cāntóng qì, DZ1007 22, JY141

The Daoist scholar Ellen Chen notes that harmony is achieved by removing the artificial barriers that exist between people:

Daoism solves the problem of the many through a different route. Harmony among the many is attained by dismantling the boundaries separating individuals and by forgetting the self in *Dào.*
Ellen Chen, Tao Te Ching, TTCC p.73

Disharmony arises from the imbalance of *yīn* and *yáng,* the essential duality present in all creation. Master Liú Yīmíng (1734–1821) maintains that – while *yīn* and *yáng* were completely unified in their original, primordial state before the processes of birth began – worldly conditioning has caused them to depart from that original union. This in turn veils the inherent spiritual awareness ("spiritual embryo") present within every human being:

At the beginning of human birth, *yīn* and *yáng* are harmoniously unified *(héhé),* and the spiritual embryo *(shèngtāi)* is perfect and whole.

> After birth, *yīn* and *yáng* become separated, and the spiritual embryo *(shèngtāi)* is impaired.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùdào lù, ZW268, DS18*

Recognizing that disharmony arises whenever there is a departure from the harmoniously unified state of his original nature, a Daoist works towards regaining that original nature. The natural consequence of mastering inner balance in this world of duality is a state of inner union, which results in a harmonious disposition towards everything in creation. Now in harmony with his surroundings and with all other creatures, the Daoist is at one with all of creation; from there, it is a natural next step to attaining oneness with the *Dào.*

Human flexibility and firmness are manifestations of *yīn* and *yáng*. Observing conditions in the natural world and various activities in day-to-day life, master Liú Yīmíng reflects on what people can do to effect a return to their original nature and correct any inharmonious disposition of either *yīn* or *yáng:*

> Water is fundamentally cool, fire is fundamentally dry. When fire rises and water falls, water and fire are in different places and cannot support each other. If water rises and fire descends, then the dry does not inflame, and the cold can become warm.
>
> As I observe this, I realize that this is the *dào* (way, principle) of separation *(lí)* and reunion *(hé)* of *yīn* and *yáng*.
>
> The human energy of *yáng* is firm; without restraint, firmness becomes excessively inflammable, like rising fire. *Yīn* energy is soft; without support, soft becomes too weak, like falling water. When firmness and softness do not support each other, *yīn* cannot create by itself, *yáng* cannot grow by itself. So the energy of life comes to a halt.
>
> Be firm, but not impatient. Use softness to manage firmness, like putting fire underneath. Be soft, but not weak, using firmness to support softness, like putting water on top.
>
> When firmness and softness are balanced, *yīn* and *yáng* are in peaceful harmony *(hépíng)*. The purity *(qīng)* of your (original) nature is restored; water and fire support each other. This is called the inversion of water and fire.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùdào lù, ZW268, DS18*

And:

> Inside every fruit there is a seed; inside every seed there is a kernel. A kernel has two segments; between the segments there is a 'heart'. This 'heart' is the tiny point of vitality. All fruits grow from this. This is called the 'heart of heaven and earth'.

> As I observe this, I realize that this is the *dào* (way, principle) of the potential for life within *yīn* and *yáng*.
>
> There is a 'kernel' only when *yīn* and *yáng* fit with each other *(xiānghé).* When there is a kernel, there is the heart of heaven and earth which is already in the kernel. Without unification *(hé)* of *yīn* and *yáng,* there is no kernel. Without the kernel, there is no heart of heaven and earth.
>
> The heart of heaven and earth is the origin of creation after creation. Those who attain this heart are holy and virtuous and become *buddhas* and immortals. Those who lose this heart become human, animals, ghosts, and demons. The having and not having of this heart all depends on whether *yīn* and *yáng* are separate *(lí)* or in harmony *(hé).*
>
> If students can harmonize *(tiáohé) yīn* and *yáng* and return to the centre without slanting or leaning, the heart of heaven and earth is recovered, revealed, and within reach. Then the *Dào* is in everything and everywhere. Every step you take is true. The pivot of creation and transformation is in the palm of your hand.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùdào lù, ZW268, DS18*

See also: **zhōng**.

heat See **inner fire**.

hēiàn (C) *Lit.* dark. See **àn**.

hēsychia (Gk) *Lit.* stillness, quietness, tranquillity, silence; inner quiet, inward stillness, sacred silence; a state of contemplation in which the mind is still; a state of inner tranquillity and mental concentration arising from and deepened by the practice of interior prayer and constant mindfulness; an attitude of silent opening to the Divine, permitting Him to fill the inner quietness with His presence; from the Greek *hēsychazein* (to be tranquil), and related to *hēsychos* (quiet, still) and *hēsychastēs* (hesychast, a monk of the Orthodox tradition); linked through the Greek with the notion of being seated or fixed, and hence of being inwardly concentrated or focused.

As early as Pythagorean times, *hēsychia* was commonly used as a term for inner contemplation. The third-century Greek writer, Diogenes Laërtius, relates that the pre-Socratic mystical philosopher, Parmenidēs, learned from his own teacher, the Pythagorean Ameinias, the secret of curbing his restless mind through stillness *(hēsychia).*[1] Parmenidēs taught that the multiplicity of things arises from one eternal Being, giving rise to the Parmenidean principle,

"All is one," a reality understood instinctively by many of the world's mystics.

Numerous references to the practice of inner peace and stillness are found in Plato's dialogues.[2] When Socratēs is about to ingest the hemlock and consummate the death sentence imposed upon him by the Athenian court, his disciples lose heart and start weeping. At this, he enjoins them to calm down, become "tranquil *(hēsychia)*", and to "try to be brave".[3] In other dialogues, *hēsychia* refers specifically to an inner state of being,[4] namely complete mental composure whatever the circumstances. "We should accustom our soul to turn as quickly as possible to the curing of the hurt," says Socratēs in the *Republic,*[5] by "keeping quiet *(hēsychia)*" during times of distress.[6]

Silence and stillness again figure prominently in descriptions of the mystical experience related by Plotinus. Yet, understandably:

> One must not chase after it, but wait quietly till it appears, preparing oneself to be its spectator *(theatēs),* as the eye awaits the rising of the sun; and the sun rising over the horizon … gives itself to the eyes to see.
>
> *Plotinus, Enneads 5:5.8; cf. PA5 pp.178–79, PEC p.232*

In Christianity, *hēsychia* is the goal of hesychasm, the primary contemplative practice of the Orthodox Church. As a spiritual discipline, *hēsychia* is sometimes said to have originated at the monastery of Mount Athos during the fourteenth century, whence it spread widely into the neighbouring countries such as Bulgaria, Serbia, and Russia. In fact, the monks of Mount Athos did not so much found a new school as breathe new life into an old one, into a practice handed down from the earliest centuries of Christianity, originating with the desert fathers. Many of the hesychast practices, especially that of unceasing prayer, particularly the Jesus prayer, are mentioned in pre-ninth-century texts, collected together in the *Philokalia.*

See also: **inner silence**, **stillness**.

1. Diogenes Laërtius, *Lives of the Philosophers* 9, *Parmenidēs* 1.
2. See A. Gocer, "Hesuchia: A Metaphysical Principle in Plato's Moral Psychology," *HMPP, passim.*
3. Plato, *Phaedo* 117e.
4. Plato, *Charmidēs* 159b, 160b–d; *Theaetetus* 153c, 179e.
5. Plato, *Republic* 10:604d.
6. Plato, *Republic* 10:604b.

hihi'o (Hw) *Lit.* a vision, a dream; a fleeting dream; in the native Hawaiian tradition, a vision that comes when one is half awake or half asleep – just dropping

off or just awakening; a vision experienced while dozing;[1] distinguished from a *moe ʻuhane,* which is true dream when fast asleep.

See also: **akakū**, **moe ʻuhane**.

1. See *Nānā I Ke Kumu, NKK1* p.11, *NKK2* p.170.

ḥikmah (A), **ḥikmat** (A/P) *Lit.* wisdom, understanding, insight, knowledge; worldly wisdom or philosophical and intellectual acumen, based on learning and reason; also, an intellectual grasp of the fundamentals of Islam, based on scriptural and doctrinal learning; mystically, direct knowledge of Reality, a direct perception of the Unseen; also, an aphorism or maxim. The term appears in the *Qurʾān:*

> He grants wisdom *(ḥikmah)* to whom He pleases;
> And he to whom wisdom *(ḥikmah)* is granted
> receives indeed a benefit overflowing;
> Yet none grasp the message but men of understanding.
>
> *Qurʾān 2:269; cf. AYA*

In mystical understanding, in spite of the seeming paradoxes involved in squaring human suffering with divine love, the dispensation of created things is not random. God is called the Wise *(al-Ḥakīm),* and wisdom *(ḥikmah)* is the human capacity to understand how everything is put together within the divine will. In this context, *ḥikmah* is not mystical experience, *per se,* but deep understanding. Al-Qāshānī differentiates between the various degrees of human wisdom.[1] *Ḥikmah* itself, he defines as

> knowledge of the Reality of things, their characteristics, attributes and properties, and of the connection between causes and effects, and of the hidden laws governing creation, and the events produced thereby.
>
> *Al-Qāshānī, Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Ṣūfīyah 127, GSTA pp.37–38; cf. GST p.28*

He goes on to distinguish "explicit or spoken wisdom *(al-ḥikmat al-manṭūq bihā)*" – that which is explicitly explained in the *sharīʿah* (religious law) and *ṭarīqah* (the spiritual path) – from "tacit wisdom *(al-ḥikmat al-maskūt ʿanhā)*". "Tacit" or "unspoken wisdom" is the "wisdom about which one keeps silent, that concerns the mysteries of Reality, the understanding of which is beyond the clergy and ordinary people, and can thus be harmful and even destructive for them". As he goes on to explain, some aspects of God's creation, such as human suffering, are understood by those who have mystical insight, but if

these truths could be put into words, it may bring harm to common people by causing them to doubt God's kindness and mercy. Hence, mystics have often avoided being explicit in discussing such matters. In this context, Shāh Niʿmat Allāh Valī quotes two unattributed verses:

> I cannot express this secret in writing:
> the mystic cannot even tell it most subtly. . . .
>
> Not every secret that you know can be told:
> not every pearl that you find can be strung.
> *Unattributed, in Rasā'il, RNV4 pp.41–42; cf. in SSE9 pp.152–53*

Al-Qāshānī continues by describing "obscure wisdom *(al-ḥikmat al-majhūlah)*" as that which is concealed from the ordinary person, such as the divine reasons for the death of innocent children or everlasting damnation in hellfire. Wisdom, he says, involves acceptance of such events as the will of God, believing them to be just and right. Again, Shāh Niʿmat Allāh Valī quotes:

> Whatever the wise Arbiter decrees is just,
> for He bestows munificence.
> *Unattributed, in Rasā'il, RNV4 p.42; cf. in SSE9 p.153*

Lastly, al-Qāshānī speaks of "universal wisdom *(al-ḥikmat al-jāmiʿah)*", also called "elect wisdom *(al-ḥikmat al-khāṣṣah)*", as knowing and acting on what is right, and thus avoiding what is wrong. And he quotes two *ḥadīth:* "O Lord, show us right for what it really is, and grant us the means to follow it; and show us wrong for what it is, and grant us the means to avoid it," and "Show us things as they really are."[2]

Other Sufis have understood the highest form of *ḥikmat* to be essentially mystical. *Ishrāqī* philosophers, for instance – who combined elements of Sufism and Shiʿism with Greek and Hermetic mysticism, and Zoroastrian angelology – contrasted *al-ḥikmat al-yūnānīyah* (Greek wisdom, worldly wisdom) with *al-ḥikmat al-yamanīyah* (Yemenite wisdom, mystic experience). 'Yemenite' wisdom is an allusion to ʿUways al-Qaranī, a mystic of the Yemen with whom Muḥammad is said to have maintained mystical contact, being aware of 'Uways' saintly influence though living far away from him.

Likewise, Aḥmad Khushnawīs writes of Shams-i Tabrīz:

> When Shams was asked about wisdom *(ḥikmat),* he replied, "Wisdom *(ḥikmat)* is of three kinds: that of speech *(guftār),* that of deeds *(kirdār),* and that of vision *(dīdār).*"

The wisdom *(ḥikmat)* of speech belongs to the exoteric clergy,
that of deeds to the worshippers, and that of vision to the mystics. . . .
The wise one is never angry with anyone who opposes him and
never harbours ill will towards anyone who treats him harshly.

Aḥmad Khushnawīs, Maqālāt-i Shams, MSK p.208; cf. in SSE9 p.154

Rūmī calls this "vision" or mystical wisdom the "wisdom of the religion *(ḥikmat-i dīn)*", by which he means divine or spiritual wisdom, rather than the wisdom of Islam. But to attain this, it is necessary to divest oneself of worldly and human wisdom:

If you want to rid yourself of misery
strive to rid yourself of wisdom *(ḥikmat)* –
The wisdom *(ḥikmat)* that is born of human nature and fantasy,
the wisdom *(ḥikmat)* that lacks the overflowing grace
of the light of the Glorious One.
The wisdom of this world *(ḥikmat-i dunyā)*
brings increase of supposition and doubt;
The wisdom of the religion *(ḥikmat-i dīn)* soars above the sky.

Rūmī, Maśnavī II:3201–3; cf. MJR2 p.387

According to a traditional saying *(ḥadīth)* ascribed to ʿAlī, "Wisdom *(ḥikmat)* is the believer's stray camel *(al-ḥikmatu ḍāllatu al-muʾmin),* and he (the believer) has the best right to it, whenever he may find it."[3] That is, wisdom belongs to the believer wherever he may be, because if your camel strays, then wherever you may find it, it is still yours. The saying is usually quoted to establish that wisdom found in other cultures and religions is also that of Islam.

Rūmī, however, interprets the saying to mean that although those who are lost in the material world have temporarily lost their innate spiritual wisdom, nevertheless it still belongs to them, like a stray camel to its owner. All souls once possessed direct and full knowledge of the Unseen in eternity, and the slow spiritual awakening of a soul implies the steady awakening of this wisdom. It is this inherent wisdom that consciously or unconsciously impels a spiritual seeker. It is like a built-in homing beacon that guides the seeker onwards. He recognizes its intuitions and guidance, just as an owner recognizes his stray camel, and ultimately it will guide him to seek the help of those who truly understand what spirituality is all about – the spiritual masters:

The spirit of that one who at the time of "Am I not (your Lord)?"[4]
saw his Lord and became beside himself and intoxicated –

He knows the scent of the wine because he drank of it before;
When he has not drunk of it, he cannot scent it.
For wisdom *(ḥikmat)* is like a stray camel:
like a go-between, it guides those who find and recognize it
into the presence of kings (spiritual masters).

Rūmī, Maśnavī II:1667–69; cf. MJR2 p.307

Ḥāfiẓ therefore recommends turning away from the wisdom *(ḥikmat)* of this world when seeking answers to the ultimate questions, seeking instead the "minstrel" – the master – and his "wine" of divine love:

Talk of the minstrel and his wine,
delve less into the mysteries of this world:
For no one has solved this mystery by wisdom *(ḥikmat),*
and they never will.

Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.2, DIH p.31; cf. DHWC (8:6) p.42

On the other hand, he also speaks of the "Spring of Wisdom" as the source of spiritual enlightenment. Here he is referring to the divine creative power:

Ḥāfiẓ, bring in hand a cup
from the Spring of Wisdom *(Chashmah-'i Ḥikmat):*
May the trace of ignorance vanish
from the slate of your heart.

Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.50, DIH p.113, in SSE9 p.149

See also: **Ḥokhmah** (3.1), **Wisdom** (3.1).

1. Al-Qāshānī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Ṣūfīyah* 127–31, *GSTA* pp.37–39.
2. *Ḥadīth,* in *Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Ṣūfīyah* 131, *GSTA* p.39; *cf. GST* p.29; *Ḥadīth, AMBF* 116.
3. *Ḥadīth, AMBF* 144, in *MJR7* p.302.
4. *Qur'ān* 7:172.

hishtavut (He) *Lit.* equanimity, stoicism, indifference. A term used by many Jewish mystics since the thirteenth century CE to describe the state of mental detachment required to attain the spiritual level of *hitbodedut* – the inner concentration in meditation that ultimately leads to the influx of the holy spirit.

This state of mind, which remains unruffled by praise or censure, is epitomized by a saying in the *Talmud:*

> Our rabbis taught: those who are insulted but do not insult, hear themselves reviled without answering, act through love and rejoice in suffering, of them the scripture teaches, "But they who love Him are as the sun when he goes forth in his might."[1]
>
> *Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Shabbat 88b; cf. JCL*

It is thought that the term may have come into common use through Rabbi Isaac ben Samuel of Akko (1250–1340) from his exposure to Sufism and to the works of earlier Jewish mystics and philosophers such as Baḥya ibn Pakuda, who lived in early eleventh-century Spain. *Hishtavut* is probably related to the Arabic term *istiwā'* (evenness, equanimity).[2] In his work *Me'irat 'Einayim* ('Light of the Eyes'), Isaac writes that *hishtavut* is the second of five stages of spiritual attainment:

> He who has merited the secret of attachment (to the Divine) will merit the secret of equanimity *(hishtavut);* and if he merits the secret of equanimity, he will merit the secret of *hitbodedut* (concentration, meditation). Once he has merited the secret of *hitbodedut,* then he will merit the holy spirit *(ruaḥ ha-kodesh),* and from that he will reach prophecy, until he prophesies and foretells future events.
>
> *Isaac of Akko, Me'irat 'Einayim, MEIA p.218, in LBDF p.256*

A story related by Isaac in his *Me'irat 'Einayim*[3] about his master Rabbi Abner, concerns the centrality of *hitbodedut* for the mystic practitioner and the desirability of equanimity in spiritual life. Interestingly, the story appears in Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī's earlier Sufi manual, *Qūt al-Qulūb,* as well as in the writings of Baḥya ibn Pakuda.[4]

According to the story, a seeker of wisdom comes to a mystic (*mitboded,* one who secludes himself) and asks for instruction on the mystic path. The mystic replies that the seeker's intention is good, and enquires whether he has achieved equanimity *(hishtavut).* When the seeker asks what he means, the mystic asks him: "If one person praises you and another insults you, would they be equal in your eyes?" The seeker replies that he would naturally feel unhappy at the insult and pleasure from the honour. So the master tells him to go in peace, for, because he has not achieved equanimity and still feels the shame of an insult, he is not ready for *hitbodedut.*

Isaac summarizes the story by saying that equanimity is brought about through attachment of one's thoughts to God *(devekut),* which allows a person to rise above all honour and shame. Of course, since the state of *devekut* is attained through meditation, it would seem that *hishtavut* is both a prerequisite for and result of *hitbodedut.*

The spiritual state of *hishtavut* implies the transcendence of pleasure and pain through the experience of the unity of the divine Reality. This is

explained by Rabbi Joseph Karo (C16th) of Safed, who seems to be referring to the above story:

> He should have concern for nothing in the world, except for those things which pertain to the service of God, but all the things of this world should be equal in his eyes, everything and its opposite. For this is the secret of the wise man who was asked by one who wished to practise union *(yiḥud):* "Have you achieved equanimity *(hishtavut)?*" For the truth is that one for whom the good things of this world and its ills are not equal cannot practise union *(yiḥud)* in a complete manner.
>
> *Joseph Karo, Maggid Mesharim, MMJK p.57a, in SEKI p.123*

Some of the mystics taught that *hishtavut* comes as a result of *hitbodedut,* but most, like Isaac of Akko, taught that *hishtavut* was a necessary step in attaining *hitbodedut.* Rabbi Joseph Albotini (*d.*1519) of Jerusalem also says that *hitbodedut* is achieved after the stage of *hishtavut:*

> Equanimity *(hishtavut)* brings one to concentration *(hitbodedut)* of the soul, and concentration *(hitbodedut)* brings about the holy spirit *(ruaḥ ha-kodesh),* which brings one to prophecy, which is the highest level. If so, one of the necessary prerequisites for your path in concentration *(hitbodedut)* is that you first have the quality of equanimity *(hishtavut),* and that you not become excited by anything.
>
> *Joseph Albotini, Sulam ha-ʿAliyah 10, SAJA, in SEKI p.124*

Another story was told among the mystics of sixteenth-century Safed concerning the level of equanimity required before the soul is pure enough to experience union with God:

> The story is told of a man who fasted most of his days, and who did many righteous deeds and married off several orphans, but who pursued honour. And he came to those who practise *hitbodedut,* who had reached the level of prophecy, and said to the greatest among them: "Sir, in your kindness let me know the reason why it is that, after I have performed all these good deeds, I have not yet merited the level of prophecy, to tell the future as you do."
>
> He answered him: "Take a purse full of figs and nuts and hang it around your neck, and go to the main street of the city before the great and honourable people, and gather together some youths and say: 'Do you wish that I should give you figs and nuts? Then hit me with your hand on my neck and on my cheek.' And after you have done this many times return to me, and I will guide you in the way of prophecy."

He replied: "Sir, how can an honourable man such as myself do such a thing?"

He answered: "Is this a great thing in your eyes? This is naught but the lightest task that you must perform if you wish that your soul see the light of truth." Then he (the man who fasted) stood up and left with downcast soul.

Sefer Shaʿarei Kedushah, in SEKI p.147 (n.36)

Hishtavut was also used by the first Hasidic master, the Baʿal Shem Tov (1698–1760). Relating *hishtavut* to *shiviti,* a term found in the *Psalms,* he says that one who maintains a state of *shiviti* lives in the presence of God and always has God before him. He can therefore be indifferent to the ever-changing events of life:

It says, "I have set *(shiviti)* God before me at all times."[5] *Shiviti* implies equanimity *(hishtavut);* whatever happens should be the same to you, whether people praise you or despise you, and so too in all other matters.... Whatever may happen, say, "It comes from (God), blessed be He, and if seems proper in His eyes." Your motives should be altogether for the sake of heaven, and as to yourself, nothing should make any difference to you. This is a very high state.

Attach your thought to the Above.... Never give your attention to the things of this world, nor even think about them at all, in order to separate yourself from the physical.... Think that you are a son of the supernal world, and none of the human beings who dwell in this world should have any importance in your eyes. For this whole world is no more than a tiny particle compared to the supernal world. Be indifferent as to whether others love or hate you, for their love and hatred means nothing.

Baʿal Shem Tov, Ẓava´at ha-Rivash 2–3, 5–6, TRVY;
cf. MOHE p.118, TRTI pp.4–7

Equanimity implies a level of consciousness in which the soul transcends worldly considerations. It entails an indifference to worldly affairs and bodily needs that frees the spirit, permitting it to transcend the bondage of material existence and rise to celestial realms. The Baʿal Shem Tov calls it an "important principle":

Equanimity *(hishtavut)* is an important principle. It means that it should be the same to you whether you are regarded as ignorant or as well-versed in the entire *Torah.* What brings it about is constant *devekut* (cleaving, intense devotion to God) to the Creator, blessed be

> He, so that because of your constant preoccupation with *devekut,* you have no time to think of other matters.
>
> *Baʿal Shem Tov, Ẓava´at ha-Rivash 10, TRVY; cf. MOHE pp.118–19, TRTI p.9*

Taught by the Baʿal Shem Tov, the attribute of *hishtavut* remained an ideal of the spiritual life among the later Hasidism.

See also: **hashva´ah**.

1. *Judges* 5:31.
2. See Moshe Idel, *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah, SEKI* p.158 (n.95).
3. Isaac of Akko, *Me´irat ʿEinayim, MEIA,* in *LBDF* pp.253–54.
4. See also Paul Fenton, *Treatise of the Pool, TOP* p.63 (n.94).
5. *Psalms* 16:8.

hitpaʿalut (He) *Lit.* ecstasy, bliss, rapture, enthusiasm; a Hasidic term used mainly by the *Ḥabad ḥasidim;* described as being of two kinds: *hitpaʿalut ha-mo´aḥ* (ecstasy of the mind) and *hitpaʿalut ha-lev* (ecstasy of the heart).

In *Kuntres ha-Hitpaʿalut* ('Tract on Ecstasy'), Rabbi Dov Baer Schneerson (of Lubavitch, 1773–1827), son of the founder of the *Ḥabad ḥasidim* movement and known as the Middle Rebbe, says that *hitpaʿalut* is

> the soul's intrinsic attachment *(devekut),* and it is even higher than the soul's wisdom *(ḥokhmah).*... This is called attachment *(devekut),* since the soul is attached *(davak)* and drawn because of the intrinsic godliness that is in it. It is automatically attracted and attached *(davak),* just as a spark is drawn to a flame. This is genuine godly ecstasy *(hitpaʿalut).*
>
> *Rabbi Dov Baer Schneerson, Kuntres ha-Hitpaʿalut 1, KHDB, in CMAK p.160*

He is saying that the soul is intrinsically attached to God because it is of the same essence, and that the experience of attachment is "genuine godly ecstasy". According to kabbalist teachings, adopted and transformed by the Hasidic mystics, there are five levels of ecstasy, which correspond to five levels of the soul, *viz. nefesh* (soul), *ruaḥ* (spirit), *neshamah* (breath), *ḥayyah* (vitality), and *yeḥidah* (singularity, oneness). Nonetheless, the soul's experience of God is ecstatic at any level:

> Man's actual soul is literally a godly power. Its five levels – *nefesh, ruaḥ, neshamah, ḥayyah,* and *yeḥidah* – are all in a literal state of divine ecstasy, with no element of physical ecstasy whatsoever.
>
> *Rabbi Dov Baer Schneerson, Kuntres ha-Hitpaʿalut 3, KHDB, in CMAK p.168*

See also: **bliss (in Judaism)**, **ecstasy**, **hitlahavut** (▸4).

hitpashtut (He) *Lit.* separation, withdrawal; expansion, infinity; abstraction; withdrawal from material sensations; in *Ḥabad* Hasidism, a stage of contemplation; the separation of the mind from material concerns so that the soul has direct perception of the Divine.

Hitpashtut ha-gashmiyut (divestment of the physical) is a term used by the first Hasidic mystic, the Baʿal Shem Tov to describe the meditative state in which the soul ascends from one 'firmament (heaven, realm)' to the next in the process of *devekut* (cleaving, intense attachment to God). The Baʿal Shem Tov's successor, Rabbi Dov Baer of Mezherich (1704–1772), writes:

> Sometimes you can speak on high with your soul alone, without your body. This is when you separate yourself from your body, and it is called 'divestment of the physical *(hitpashtut ha-gashmiyut)*'. In such a state, you feel no bodily sensation and are totally unaware of the physical world. Your entire mind depicts only the supernal universes, with their angels and archangels.
>
> When you reach the universe of *aẓilut* (emanation, the highest spiritual realm, closest to God), you are devoid of all sensation. All that you experience is the most ethereal feeling, which is nothing other than God's closeness.
>
> *Rabbi Dov Baer of Mezherich, Likkutim Yekarim 49, LYDB, in MKAK p.295*

Using *hitpashtut* in the sense of 'expansion', 'infinity' or 'abstraction', the Baʿal Shem Tov taught (as quoted by Dov Baer) that "Everything is the expansion *(hitpashtut)* of the Creator whose glory fills every part of the universe."[1]

See also: **hitbodedut** (8.5), **hitbonenut** (8.5).

1. Baʿal Shem Tov, in *Maggid Devarav Le-Yaʿakov, MDLB* p.44, in *MOHE* p.82.

ḥokhmah penimit (He) *Lit.* inner *(penimit)* wisdom *(ḥokhmah);* an early term (C12th onwards) used in Provence and Spain for the Kabbalah, the esoteric knowledge taught by Jewish mystics of the time.

From its beginnings in Provence in southern France during the twelfth century, the Kabbalah soon spread to Spain (Catalonia and Castille), and thence throughout the Mediterranean world, especially after the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 during the time of the Inquisition, with the full flowering of the Kabbalah taking place in sixteenth-century Safed, in northern Israel.

See also: **Kabbalah** (▸4).

holiness The condition or quality of being imbued or endowed with great purity and sublimity; likeness to God; the essential nature of God; pure spirituality; virtue, piety, righteousness, perfection; a term generally used somewhat loosely, but actually referring to a high degree of inner purity and spiritualization of a person's being. The holiest of all human beings is a God-realized soul, one who has become completely united with God within, who is the source of all holiness. The Romanian Orthodox Christian priest, theologian and professor Dumitru Stăniloae (1903–1993) defines holiness as "God shining through the consciousness of man". He continues:

> In the saint, God reveals himself as transcendent, as different from the world. Holiness is the luminous and active mystery of God present in all His transcendence, a mystery which enlightens and transforms. Holiness cannot therefore be the attribute of some impersonal reality belonging to the natural order: what is impersonal lacks the depths of mystery. Holiness belongs to the order of mystery; that is why it can only be the attribute of God Himself in His nature as transcendent person. God, the unfathomably personal, imparts Himself in transcendence. Hence, the paradoxical nature of holiness: it is at one and the same time transcendence and self-disclosure, or communication. . . .
>
> Since holiness is an attribute of the transcendent and therefore mysterious person of God, we are seized with trembling and overwhelmed with shame in its presence; for it is the manifestation of a consciousness superior to our own, one which makes us see our wickedness. Holiness is the radiance shining from a transcendent person whose object in revealing himself is to raise us up to him. We feel impelled to leave our sinful state so as to be able to remain in his presence, while at the same time this radiance enlightens our own consciousness, making it more sensitive to sin. It is as if the holiness of God invaded the human consciousness with supreme transcendent urgency, kindling in us the desire for purification and a longing for what is greater than ourselves.
>
> *Dumitru Stăniloae, Prayer and Holiness 3; cf. PHI p.12*

This state, says Hēsychios, is the natural state of the soul, regained by purifying the heart of all negative tendencies:

> In this way, the soul can attain in the Lord that state of beauty, loveliness and integrity in which it was created by God in the beginning. As Antony, the great servant of God, said, "Holiness is achieved when the

> spiritual part of the soul *(tēs psychēs to noeron)* is in its natural state." And again he said: "The soul realizes its integrity when its spiritual part *(to noeron)* is in that state in which it was created."
>
> *Hēsychios the Priest, On Holiness 179, Philokalia; cf. PCT1 p.194*

Everything in this world, writes de Caussade, is "false and vain". To see through the "riddle" and discover the divine holiness, he goes on to counsel:

> Gaze at the Principle, the Source, and the Origin of all things. Then we should find that everything has a supernatural quality, something divine about it that can lead us onward to holiness.
>
> *J.-P. de Caussade, Abandonment to Divine Providence 2:1, ADP p.38*

Since every good thing is eventually counterfeited, Walter Hilton advises being on guard against charismatic 'holiness':

> Be particularly wary of people who talk charmingly and have no holiness in terms of virtue nor sweetness of heart, but only a likeness of holiness in their speech and bearing: those who show off, boasting of visions, revelations, unusual feelings, singular actions or insights, or understandings higher than other men's, through which they are admired and receive exaggerated praise and honour from those they speak to. Such people are often deceitful snares for the unwise.
>
> *Walter Hilton, On Perfection 3, PAS pp.5–6*

True holiness is not something that can be assumed. It is, writes Bernard of Clairvaux, a divine gift: "Righteousness or holiness is a gift of God, not the fruit of man's effort."[1] Thus, in one of the early Christian *Odes of Solomon,* the devotee says that holiness has come to him through immersion in the "Right Hand" of the Lord (the divine Word):

> For Thy Right Hand raised me up,
> and caused sickness to pass away from me.
> And I became strong in Thy Truth,
> and holy in Thy holiness.
>
> *Odes of Solomon 25:9–10, OSD p.116*

See also: **perfection** (▸4), **piety** (▸4), **purity** (▸4), **righteousness** (▸4), **sanctity**, **virtue** (▸4).

1. Bernard of Clairvaux, *On the Song of Songs* 22:9, *WBC2* p.22.

huándān (C) *Lit.* restored *(huán)* elixir *(dān);* reverted elixir; to restore the elixir; in the Daoist *nèidān* (inner alchemy) tradition, the sacred presence of the *Dào,* which is restored by spiritual practice, enabling the practitioner to return to the *Dào:*

> To restore the elixir *(huándān)* is to restore *yáng* (the spiritual, the celestial) from within *yīn* (the mundane).
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Xiàngyán pòyí, ZW247, DS14*

Spiritual awareness of one's original nature (the elixir) is recovered or restored through refinement of the human mind *(rénxīn)* until it becomes the mind of *Dào (dàoxīn):*

> Outer alchemy *(wàidān)* is to recover what has been lost and to return it from outside to inside. This is restoration of the (outer) elixir *(huándān).* Inner alchemy *(nèidān)* refines the *yīn* energy out of the elixir that is inherently restored in order to recover true inner purity. This is the great elixir. When (recovery of) the outer elixir has been accomplished and the inner elixir made whole, the task has been achieved. Then you will live in freedom, afar and beyond, in the home of absolute Nothingness *(wúhéyǒu).*
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17*

Nominal timeframes of nine or seven years are associated with *huándān.* According to the *Folios of the Hundred Questions,* an adept needs "nine years *(jiǔnián)*" to achieve the restored elixir *(huándān).*[1] In Daoist symbolism, the number nine is associated with pure *yáng,* and signifies attainment. It does not represent a specific timeframe, but is rather a general expression for a long period of time. Seven is the *yáng* number for fire, and signifies completion, wholeness, or perfection.

See also: **jīndān**, **jiǔhuán**, **qīfǎn**.

1. See *Bǎiwèn piān,* in *Dàoshū, DZ1017* 5:7a–22a; see also Zhāng Bóduān, *Wùzhēn piān, DZ141;* Lǐ Dàochún, *Zhōnghé jí, DZ249, JY226.*

huángyá (C) *Lit.* yellow *(huáng)* shoots *(yá);* yellow sprouts; one of several terms in the Daoist *nèidān* (inner alchemy) tradition that signify the 'elixir', the awakening spirit as it gains in spiritual awareness and freedom by means of the cleansing and purification of spiritual practice; also, in ancient medical texts, a technical term for a location in the body.

Yellow symbolizes earth or the centre, shoots are potential life, and these 'yellow shoots' "grow in your own home".[1] In other words, the awakening spirit is to be sought, found, and nurtured within oneself:

> Mount *Sumeru* (Xūmíshān) is right in the middle between heaven and earth; it symbolizes the one treasure in the human body. That one treasure within is the spiritual embryo *(shèngtāi),* (development of) which is also called 'yellow shoots *(huángyá)*'.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Bǎizì bēi zhù, ZW257, DS3*

In a poem entitled 'Refining the Spirit', master Sūn Bù'èr (C12th) speaks of rediscovering and embracing the state of being that was enjoyed before birth:

> One day, the form of your pre-birth relic *(shèlì)*
> will enter your embrace.
> Be vigilant, as if holding a filled vessel.
> Be soft, as if caressing a young child.
> The gate to the world must be closely shut.
> The portals of heaven must first be opened.
> Cleanse and purify the yellow shoots *(huángyá).*
> On the mountain top *(shāntóu),* thunder shakes the earth *(zhèn dìléi).*
>
> *"Liànshén," Sūn Bù'èr yuánjūn fǎyǔ, ZW370, JY203*

Shèlì (a Buddhist term for the relic of an enlightened being) refers to one's original spirit, as it is understood to have been before taking birth. Master Chén Yīngníng (C20th) provides a detailed explanation of the symbolism inherent in the last two lines of this poem. "Thunder shaking the earth *(dìléi zhèndòng)*" and "raining on the mountain top *(shāntóu yǔ)*" are images depicting the meditation experience of the rise of subtle life energy within the body resulting from the process of inner refinement and purification:

> When initiating Immortal Sister Zhāng, Lǚ Yán (Lǚ Dòngbīn, *b.*796 CE) said: "To experience 'thunder shaking the earth *(dìléi zhèndòng)*' and 'raining on the mountain top *(shāntóu yǔ)*', it is necessary to cleanse and purify the yellow shoots *(huángyá)* germinating from the earth."
>
> "Yellow shoots" is another name for the elixir of great restoration. The "mountain top" here perhaps refers to the *níwán* palace (palace of *nirvāṇa*) in the head. . . .
>
> The effect of cleansing comes from being still and nothing else. On the path of the elixir *(dāndào),* after small stillness, there is a small change; after great stillness, there is great change (spiritually). The

> deeper the power of stillness, the greater the effect of 'thunder shaking *(zhèndòng)*'. When the 'thunder shaking' is complete, it pushes open the top of the head and emerges from the body. Yet this point cannot be reached without great stillness.
>
> We human beings can control the depth of the stillness by progressing from brief to lasting, from shallow to deep. As for the result of 'thunder shaking', it is then up to nature, and cannot be forced or created by human effort. It may seem that it is not under our control; but it is proven that small stillness produces small change, and great stillness produces great change.
>
> The reason why people usually do not have this experience is because they are as yet unable to be still. When practitioners do not attain great results, it is because, even though they know stillness, their stillness is still superficial and weak.
>
> Buddhists who practise *Chán* are also able to be quiet and remain still for days on end. However, ultimately, they never have this experience, because they only know how to sit, and do not know how to refine energy *(qì)*.
>
> *Chén Yīngníng, Sūn Bù'èr nǚgōng nèidān cìdìshī zhù, SBNN*

In a text rich with traditional imagery, master Zhāng Bóduān (C11th) indicates that it is a mistake to seek spirituality outside, when it is to be found within. Outer practices ("seek herbs and burn reeds") are not useful:

> Everyone inherently has the medicine of immortality *(chángshēng)*: it is just that they have become lost along the way and have discarded it in vain. When the sweet dew *(gānlù)* falls – that is when heaven and earth join. The place where the yellow shoots *(huángyá)* develop – that is where water and fire *(i.e. yīn* and *yáng)* unite.
>
> A frog in a well would say: "How can there be a cavern in which a dragon dwells?" A bird in a cage cannot know about a nest that nurtures a phoenix. When the elixir *(dān)* is fully developed, the court (inner being) is naturally filled with gold (spirituality). Where is the need to seek herbs and burn reeds?
>
> *Zhāng Bóduān, Wùzhēn piān, DZ141*

In his commentary on this text, master Liú Yīmíng (1734–1821) explains the "growing of the yellow shoots" as the "stilling of thoughts":

> The 'falling of sweet dew *(gānlù)*' is the cleansing of the mind. The 'growing of the yellow shoots *(huángyá)*' is the stilling of thoughts. When the mind is clean and thoughts are still, the one true spiritual

nature *(yīlíng zhēnxìng)* that is innately conscious is suspended in emptiness –silent and still, its perception unimpeded and universally penetrating – always adaptive, always still. Creation and its transformations *(zàohuà)* cannot change it; (the myriad) things cannot smother it. Then your life is in your own hands, and does not depend upon heaven. This is the path of immortal life *(chángshēng)*.

How could a frog in a well know that such a dragon cave exists? How could a caged bird know that such a phoenix nest exists? Hearing of 'medicinal elements' and 'firing practice', people think that they represent a way of smelting and refining by burning reeds and trying other such methods. They do not know that when the cultivation of the great elixir is complete, gold and jade (spirituality) fill the court – (true spiritual) life *(mìng)* is preserved in its completed form; its wealth and grace are unparalleled. How can worldly dross be worthy of attachment?

Liú Yīmíng, Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17

See also: **shèngtāi**.

1. Liú Yīmíng, *Wùzhēn zhízhǐ, ZW253, DS17.*

ḥuḍūr (A), **ḥużūr** (P) *Lit.* presence, implying presence with God; God's presence; in Sufism, the condition of the heart when in God's presence; also, presence with the self or with the world, as opposed to presence with God. Various Sufis have provided definitions:

To be present *(ḥuḍūr)* is to behold God within oneself through qualities of light.

Rūzbihān, Sharḥ-i Shaṭḥiyāt 374:1061, CPS p.552, in MSG3 p.69

In *ṣūfī* terms, *ḥużūr* means for the heart to be present or behold the presence of the unseen Command with certainty. Whatever the heart is present with, it beholds that, whether it be God or others. This state of presence occurs when a *ṣūfī,* through constant repetition *(źikr)* of the Lord's Name in his heart, remembers the Lord constantly, and is never unmindful of Him. Then it is said he is present with God.

Javād Nūrbakhsh, MSG3 p.67

To *ṣūfīs,* presence *(ḥużūr)* means to be absent from people and present with God. The level of union is also called presence *(ḥużūr)*.

Ja'far Sajjādī, Farhang-i Lughāt va-Iṣṭilāḥāt va-Ta'bīrāt-i 'Irfānī, FLI p.321

> Sometimes *ḥuḍūr* indicates one's return from a state of being absent to a state of being present and mindful of oneself. Then it is said that one is present with people.
>
> *Al-Qushayrī, Risālah, RQQQ p.41*

Quoting a saying *(ḥadīth)* traditionally ascribed to Muḥammad, Rūmī observes that true prayer requires being in the presence of the Divine:

> No prayer is complete
> without presence *(ḥuḍūr)* of the heart with God.
>
> *Ḥadīth, AMBF 9, in MJR2 p.24*

In Sufi discussions, *ḥużūr* is often twinned with *ghaybat* (absence), meaning both absence from the self and absence from God. Sufi systematizers sometimes speak of various stages or stations of *ḥużūr.* The first stage is *ḥuḍūr al-nafas* (presence of breath), in which the seeker remembers with effort, struggling to stay present with God with every breath. The second stage, *ḥużūr-i dil* (presence of heart), is when the *dil* (spiritual heart) is drawn by the divine attraction, experienced after the inner faculties of perception *(ḥawāss-i dil)* begin to function.[1]

See also: **ghaybah**, **Ḥuḍūr** (7.2).

1. Javād Nūrbakhsh, "Absence and Presence," *APN* p.4.

ḥulūl (A/P) *Lit.* descent, alighting, settling; also incarnation, infusion, indwelling; the entering of one thing into another in such a way that no distinction remains between them; thus, the doctrine of incarnation. A term used in Muslim metaphysics for the settling of a superior entity upon a lower, such as the soul upon the body, or the divine *ʿAql* (Intelligence, creative power) upon an individual. *Ḥulūl,* as incarnationism, is more commonly known as a heretical doctrine in Islam, embodying the idea of union between two essences, one human, one divine, dwelling together in one body, as in the Christian belief concerning Jesus.

The doctrines of both *ḥulūl* and *ittiḥād* (unification, union with God) are strongly condemned by orthodox Islam. It was on being found guilty of the heresy of *ḥulūl* that Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj was condemned to death for his well-known utterance, "I am God *(anā al-Ḥaqq)!*" Interestingly, many Sufis also joined in castigating these ideas as heresy, while expounding the oneness of the perfect saint and God using other terms. This was not simply to avoid problems with the Muslim authorities. The Sufis' objection to *ḥulūl* and

ittiḥād (unification) is that these concepts, in trying to serve as a description of the union with the divine Beloved, actually imply that prior to their union two separate beings existed. According to both Sufism and Islam, there is and has always been only one Being:

> Know that between the form and the mirror no true unification *(ittiḥād)* or incarnation *(ḥulūl)* can take place.... Unification *(ittiḥād)* and incarnation *(ḥulūl)* take place only between two essences, but to the eye of contemplation and in all existence, only one Essence can be perceived....
>
> Light does not change when it shines through coloured glass, but only seems to do so. Its rays shine through the glass, and only then do hues and tints appear. If you do not understand this, then:
>
> > Come and look into my eyes, and you will see a sun
> > shining through many different pieces of coloured glass,
> > matching the colour of each piece.
>
> The light is one, but the colours are many.
>
> *ʿIrāqī, Divine Flashes 11, RLRI pp.43–44*

ʿIrāqī is pointing out that union with the Beloved does not imply either of the two heresies of unification *(ittiḥād)* or incarnationism *(ḥulūl). Ittiḥād* means that two things come together and become one; *ḥulūl* means that one thing enters into another. What actually happens is the manifestation or expression of the One, which he compares to an image reflected in the mirror. No one ever suggests that the image is "incarnated in" or "united with" the mirror, for the mirror and the image never exist separately. This is the nature of the entire manifested creation.[1]

Those Sufis who have found no difficulty with the doctrine of *ḥulūl* have said that in his oneness with God, the lover can indeed be described as an 'incarnation' of God. Thus, ʿAyn al-Quḍāt writes:

> O friend, if you wish to obtain eternal bliss, spend one hour in the company of a *ḥulūlī* (one who has reached the state of 'indwelling' in which divine and human are united) who is a *ṣūfī* so that you can realize who the *ḥulūlī* really is. Did not a *ṣūfī* master at this juncture exclaim, "The *ṣūfī* is God!" ʿAbd Allāh Anṣārī said that "the scholar vaunts his knowledge and the ascetic prides himself on his austerities; of the *ṣūfī* what can be said? For the *ṣūfī* is all Him." ... In this station, whatever you have heard from him, you have really heard from God. Ah! Whoever desires to hear the divine mysteries without any

> mediation, say "Hear them from ʿAyn al-Quḍāt Hamadānī," which is the meaning of (the *ḥadīth*), "God speaks from the tongue of ʿUmar."
>
> *ʿAyn al-Quḍāt Hamadānī, Tamhīdāt 393–94, TQH p.300, in HSL1 pp.335–36*

Hamadānī appears to be using the term *ḥulūlī* in a general sense, although according to Hujwīrī, the *Ḥulūlīs* were also the followers of Abū Ḥulmān of Damascus, to whom "these sectaries impute … the doctrines of incarnation *(ḥulūl)* and commixture *(imtizāj)* and transmigration of spirits *(naskh-i arwāh)*".[2]

Rūmī, in his characteristically forthright manner, dismisses the entire matter as intellectual wrangling, when he speaks of those intellectuals who have fallen "into the abyss of argument over incarnation *(ḥulūl)* and *ittiḥād*".[3]

See also: **imtizāj**, **ittiḥād**.

1. *Cf.* W.C. Chittick, *Divine Flashes, DF* pp.145–46.
2. Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-Maḥjūb* XIV:11, *KMM* p.334, *KM* p.260.
3. Rūmī, *Maśnavī* V:4146–49; *cf. MJR6* p.248.

hún (C) *Lit.* confused, dirty, mixed, muddy. See **zhuó**.

huò, **luàn**, **mí** (C) *Lit.* bewilderment *(huò);* disorder, upheaval, turmoil *(luàn);* perplexity *(mí);* confusion *(huò, luàn, mí);* (to be) lost in something *(mí);* various terms used to express confusion and perplexity; in Daoism, a confused or bewildered state of mind resulting either from intellectual perplexity or over-involvement with worldly things and events; the antithesis of the still mind that is required for advanced spiritual progress, and which flows naturally from realization of the *Dào.*

A poem entitled 'Alerting the World to the Four Conditions', from a collection of poems on meditation by master Lǐ Dàochún (C13th), counsels practitioners against becoming entangled in vacuous bodily, mental, and worldly concerns. Lǐ Dàochún recommends a detached and unconcerned attitude:

> Body, mind, life, affairs –
> four empty words.
> How many bewildered *(mí)* people
> are drawn and entangled by these things!
> Their plight and affliction are due only
> to their quest for power and self-advantage.
> Their reincarnations *(lúnhuí)* result entirely
> from attachment.

Still the mind until it shows no trace,
even while the body is moving about (in the world).
Forget contrivance in dealing with the world:
when things change, let them be.
In any situation or encounter,
always yield.
Then the foundation of your (true spiritual) life *(mìng)*
will be eternally firm,
and your original nature *(yuánxìng)* will be whole and luminous.

Lǐ Dàochún, "Yǒng sìyuán jǐngshì," Zhōnghé jí, DZ249

Shuǐjīngzǐ (*aka.* Zhào Yīmíng, *fl.*C16th) lists some of the causes of a bewildered mind and explains how "liquor" in particular "confuses *(míluàn)*" the mind and has an adverse effect on body energies, leading to a shortened lifespan:

How does the mind become wild? The causes are liquor, sex, wealth, anger, frustration, fame, fortune, passion, and possessive love. People desire liquor to gratify the body momentarily and do not realize the harm it can cause. It confuses *(míluàn)* the mind and obscures one's original nature. The meridians of the human body reflect the movement of the celestial bodies of heaven. The internal energy (*qì,* life energy) circulates as the bodies of heaven move through the skies. When you drink alcohol, the passage of energy through the meridians becomes disordered. When the movement of this energy is disordered, the constellations (configurations of *qì*) in the human body are disturbed. When the constellations in the body are disturbed, the life span is shortened.

Shuǐjīngzǐ, Qīngjìng jīng (18) túzhù, ZW77; cf. CSTM p.114

Delving deeper, the unknown author of the *Scripture on the Three Pure Subtle Natures* (C18th) – attributing his collection of sayings to master Lǚ Dòngbīn (*b.*796 CE) – assigns the cause of confusion to the passions, advising that the "root" of the passions ("attachment") should be completely uprooted and destroyed, otherwise, "what is being controlled are only offshoots". The six sense organs follow the Buddhist model in which the sixth is the part of the mind that registers sensory impressions:

The six organs (eyes, mouth, *etc.*) generate the six perceptions (seeing, tasting, *etc.*). The six perceptions generate the seven passions (hatred, lust, *etc.*). Hardly known to people is that the seven passions confuse *(míhuò)* the truth of their origin. Once the truth of their origin is lost, the seven passions run wild.

> All passions feed on desire. Why is this? Because attachment is the root of all passions. If you are not attached to anything, you do not desire anything. When you do not desire anything, how can you crave anything? If you do not crave anything, you will not dislike anything. If you neither crave nor dislike anything, what place is there for anger? Without anger, fear does not arise. Without fear, all traces of unhappiness disappear.
>
> When you realize that attachment is the root of all passions, (you will see that) if you try to control the passions forcibly without uprooting the attachment, what is being controlled are only offshoots.
>
> *Qīngwēi sānpǐn zhēnjīng, ZW225*

Pressing his point, the author continues by presenting several examples which emphasize that, as a principle, the most practical option is always to tackle the root of a problem:

> It is like a flood of water, flowing rapidly with a force that could reach the sky. If you try to dam it here and there without blocking its source and managing the flow, you will eventually go under and drown.
>
> It is like a blazing fire, with burning hot air shooting high up into the sky. If you stamp it out here and there without getting rid of its energy source and blocking its pathway, you will actually aid the force of the fire, and instantly succumb as soon as you come into contact with it.
>
> It is like the tides of the ocean, indefinably vast, boiling deep and wide, rising here and falling there, waxing there and waning here. Where is the limit? Where is the end?
>
> Feeling and feeding the attachment is entirely dependent on the mind, and continues and persists as a result of *karma* (*yuán,* cause).
>
> Only those who truly know of this root are firmly committed and courageously resolved to depend on wisdom to sever the root and shoots of attachment. Like a sword, wisdom eradicates its likes (and dislikes), and allows none of the seven passions to grow from the root.
>
> The seven passions are a great barrier, but attachment and desire are the hinges of that barrier. By severing the hinges and thus breaking down the barrier, you can leap beyond the limitation of space, let go of everything, and walk on a smooth path – with nothing to stop you or hold you back – towards enlightenment of the perfect *Dào,* to reach the highest Truth.
>
> I pity the people of the world who create multitudes of distractions and obstacles for themselves because of this one thing – attachment. They are deluded *(míhuò)* and turned upside down from birth to death, barely aware or conscious. Even when someone of high attainment

> explains this to their face, it is like beating a drum for the deaf or lighting a candle for the blind. They still do not wake up. What a pity!
>
> *Qīngwēi sānpǐn zhēnjīng, ZW225*

The same text also speaks of a form of confusion particularly relevant to disciples of a "genuine master *(zhèngshī)*" – confusion concerning concepts. A true teacher may employ useful concepts, but all concepts belong to the thinking mind, not to the still mind:

> Practitioners, let me tell you this: you must follow the teachings of a genuine master *(zhèngshī).* Do not be deceived *(wúhuò)* by falsehoods and take to side roads *(pángmén).* Remain clear and empty, calm and still, so that you can nurture your vital essence *(jīng)* and spirit *(shén).* All concepts such as the mysterious gate *(xuánguān),* the mysterious female *(xuánpìn),* the golden creator *(huángpó),* the (spiritual) infant *(yīng'ér), yīn* and *yáng,* water and fire, sun and moon, heaven and earth – are only in the mind *(fāngcùn).* What is the use of all these terms? They do not exist as real things. It is so simple and easy, what doubt can there be? If this obstacle of doubt is not removed, confusion *(huò)* will grow.
>
> *Qīngwēi sānpǐn zhēnjīng, ZW225*

In the *Tàipíng jīng* ('Scripture on Peace and Tranquillity'), which lays out the teachings of heaven's envoy, the Celestial Master, concerning the application of Daoist principles to the government of a country, the disciple Chún admits perplexity when trying to understand his master:

> When I ponder the master's writings I know they are all true and contain nothing that needs modification. But this pupil is foolish and dull. It vexes me not to know where you found the model that you have shown us. I know that you are an illustrious teacher, a man of the spirit *(shénrén)* sent by majestic heaven, but still I am perplexed *(guài)* by the sheer number of your words. If you would only have mercy and point to the essential proof for the lessons we are to draw from heaven's *yīn* and *yáng* (interplay of duality among created things) and for the predictions cast by the spirits of heaven and earth. I am annoyed and confused *(fánluàn)* because I cannot figure it out.
>
> Of course, what I say goes against your prohibitions, but I am unable to control the desire to speak out. Although you will criticize me, I wish that you would give us a clear illustration of the token and the model provided by heaven, so that it can be transmitted for ten thousand times ten thousand generations, brilliant beyond all doubt and bright as the sun at noon, never to be changed and never to go away.
>
> *Tàipíng jīng 60, TJWM p.104; cf. SGPT p.243*

The master responds with assertions concerning the truth of his teachings, founded on the premise: "Everything I tell you is supported by the patterns of heaven."[1] But since truth and clarity are in the understanding of the master and his hearers, not in his words, he is unable to comply with the disciple's request and provide an explanation that will last for all time.

Later, the master is asked how the rulers of antiquity were able to keep peace in their realms without the benefit of various texts to guide them. The master replies that they did not require such texts because they were already in tune with the *Dào*. It is only the "learned" who "become perplexed *(mí)*" because they are no longer in tune with the workings of "heaven", and consequently place reliance on the meaning of words:

> What a good question! Following heaven's movement, men were simple and straightforward at that time. They all held on to the *Dào,* and only had faith in the One. Speaking in many ways they understood each other. Everyone tried to be perfectly sincere and faithful and thought only of fulfilling heaven's will. Nobody tried to deceive others. That is why lord, official, and ordinary subject – all three of them – combined their efforts, were of the same intention, and interacted so that they could conduct their affairs. Disorder will arise if a family is made up of men who are not of the same mind.
>
> Nowadays, (in an age when) evil is inherited and transmitted, there are many texts and writings. With ever more texts, men deceive each other. Moreover, (this material) is frivolous and superficial. Hence, the worthy *(xiánrú)* and learned become perplexed *(mí)* and no longer follow the will of heaven.
>
> *Tàipíng jīng 65, TJWM p.155; cf. SGPT pp.318–19*

Commenting on a poem attributed to master Lǚ Dòngbīn, Master Zhāng Sānfēng (C14th) offers some thoughts on the confusion that results from the human passions that come to the fore when one is dealing with worldly affairs:

> This *Dào* is the *Dào* that is true and eternal *(cháng).* It is easy to become confused and deluded *(mí)* when dealing with worldly affairs, so you must not lose yourself *(mí)* in them.
>
> If you neither take things to heart nor react, then you will be empty, silent, void. Remember – when things come, deal with them. When things go, do not cling to them. Being just, honourable, open and aboveboard is being not deluded *(mí).* Then, your true nature *(zhēnxìng)* will be pure and still *(qīngjìng),* and the original spirit *(yuánshén)* will manifest. . . .
>
> Human nature is like a raging fire. Any disturbance caused by pleasure, anger, sadness and delight, likes and dislikes, desire and

hatred – feelings that are constantly and unpredictably changing – create delusional thoughts; so it is difficult to still one's nature *(xìng).* You must be truly vigilant against anger *(fèn); …* you must truly give up desire *(yù).*

To still the body is to refine one's vital essence *(jīng).* When one's vital essence is refined, then the 'tiger roars', and your original spirit *(yuánshén)* is manifested. To still the mind is to refine the life energy *(qì).* When the life energy is refined, then the 'dragon rumbles', and your original energy *(yuánqì)* is preserved and still. To still thoughts is to refine the spirit *(liànshén).* When the spirit is refined, then the two energies combine, the three originals unite, and your original energy automatically returns.

The three originals *(yuán)* are: vital essence *(jīng),* life energy *(qì),* and spirit *(shén).* The two energies are *yīn* and *yáng.* If practitioners can remain undeluded *(bùmí)* when dealing with things, then their original spirit *(yuánshén)* will automatically return, and their original nature *(běnxìng)* will automatically come to the fore.

When your (original) nature *(xìng)* is present, then the inherent Energy *(xiāntiān zhī qì)* will automatically return to the body. Then it is no longer difficult to restore (true spiritual) life and return to the Root. As the saying goes, "reverse the light *(huíguāng)* and turn within (*fǎnzhào,* 'revert the radiance')." Keep the mind unified in the centre, with no thought arising from within and no thought impinging from without. When practitioners stop losing *(mí)* their (true) nature in worldly affairs, then the (inherent) Energy returns and the elixir (*dān,* awareness of their original nature) automatically manifests.

Zhù Lǚzǔ Bǎizì bēi, in Xuánjī zhǐjiǎng, in Zhāng Sānfēng xiānshēng quánjí, JY236 7:26b–27a, ZW125

The Daoist terms *jīng, qì* and *shén* relate to different forms or aspects of the one inherent Energy *(xiāntiān zhī qì)* as it manifests at three bodily centres. The centre for *jīng,* often called the 'lower elixir field', is variously described as the kidneys, the reproductive organs, or is simply identified as being below the diaphragm. The centre for *qì,* the 'middle elixir field' is the heart area or above the diaphragm. The centre for *shén* is the head, the 'upper elixir field'. When these three energies are scattered throughout the body, away from their respective centres, they are referred to as *jīng, qì,* and *shén.* When they are collected at their centres through spiritual practice, they are termed *yuánjīng, yuánqì* and *yuánshén,* where *yuán* (original) refers to the primordial, innate energies that pre-exist human existence. Put another way, the bodily *jīng, qì* and *shén* are reflections of their original or higher forms – *yuánjīng, yuánqì,* and *yuánshén.* The same applies to the term *xìng* (nature). When dispersed throughout the body, one's nature is excitable and scattered. When stilled

and present, it becomes calm, and one's true or original nature *(yuánxìng)* is revealed.

Master Liú Chǔxuán (C12th) says that most people are lost. They cling to life while moving towards death. Hoping to find a solution by intellect alone, they lose touch with their original nature and find themselves in the "land of punishment" (*i.e.* of cause and effect, the material world):

> The confused *(mí)* people of the world bring suffering upon themselves by coveting life and embarking on the road to death. Straining their minds, they use their cleverness, and thus their (true) nature *(xìng)* sinks into the land of punishment.
>
> *Liú Chǔxuán, Chángshēng yǔlù, DZ1058 6b, JY206; cf. in TPEQ p.45*

The *Book of Master Wén* (*c.*200 BCE) credits Lǎozǐ with the advice:

> Regard the world as unimportant, then the spirit will be free of burdens. Regard the myriad things as trivial, then the mind will not be deluded *(bùhuò).* Regard life and death as the same, then thoughts (of either) will be free from fear. Adapt to change, then the (inner) brightness will not be obscured.
>
> Adepts *(zhìrén)* lean on a pillar that never bends. They travel on a path that is never obstructed. They are endowed with inexhaustible reserves. They learn from a master who never dies *(i.e.* the *Dào).* They are unlimited and unhindered. Whether in good or bad (situations), high or low (places), they embrace life; they are not deluded, so they are calm and yielding. Whether they experience calamity or fortune, gain or loss, none of these is sufficient to trouble their minds.
>
> *Wénzǐ 3, DZ746*

The *Zhuāngzǐ* (*c.*C3rd BCE) advises that simply understanding the problem is enough to provide a significant part of the solution. Even those who simply become aware of the foolishness of confused worldly existence are far better off than those who live and die in complete ignorance of the truth:

> He who knows he is a fool *(yú)* is not the biggest fool *(dàyú).* He who knows he is confused *(huò)* is not in the worst confusion *(dàhuò).* The man in the worst confusion *(dàhuò)* will end his life without ever getting straightened out. The biggest fool *(dàyú)* will end his life without ever seeing the light.
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 12, CTW p.139*

Daoist sages say that it is because of confusion that people have lost sight of their naturalness and spontaneity. Sages attribute this loss to the desire for

worldly and intellectual knowledge, which they deem to be of a much lower order than spiritual knowledge. "The world is dulled and darkened by great confusion *(dàluàn),*" says the *Zhuāngzǐ,* and "the blame lies in this coveting of knowledge."[2] The author goes on to explain how every human being possesses an innate knowledge or wisdom that is of far greater value than acquired or conceptual knowledge. But even though acquired knowledge may be judged as deficient, no one perceives the value of his natural and innate knowledge. As a result, says this ancient text, many human beings, unaware of the natural order, have ceased living in harmony with the rhythms of nature, seeking instead to impose their own:

> In the world, everyone knows enough to pursue what he does not know, but no one knows enough to pursue what he already knows. Everyone knows enough to judge what he has to be no good; but no one knows enough to judge what he already has to be good.
>
> This is how the great confusion *(dàluàn)* comes about – blotting out the brightness of the sun and moon above, destroying the vitality of the hills and streams below, disrupting the round of the four seasons.… So great is the confusion *(luàn)* of the world (*tiānxià,* 'land under heaven') that comes from coveting knowledge!
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 10; cf. CTW p.113*

Sages and enlightened masters continually do their utmost to advise people to understand the consequences of attachment and craving, but few heed their advice, and the majority continue to wander in confusion. Once in a while, the sages express their exasperation:

> With all the confusion *(huò)* in the world these days, no matter how often I point the way, it does no good. Sad, is it not?
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 12, CTW p.140*

By understanding how the mind works and how attachment and craving for material things leads to confusion, a person will have less to be concerned about. With less to be concerned about, he will have fewer thoughts and worries, and will automatically be more contented and at peace. But so long as the mind is confused, it is well-nigh impossible to achieve the true stillness of mind and non-attachment (*wúwéi,* non-doing, action without action) for which a Daoist strives. It is only when there is emptiness and quietude of mind that the Daoist can achieve spiritual insight into the *Dào.* Following the way to "spiritual integration" (oneness) with *Dào* gradually returns the mind to clarity. This is why the *Dàodé jīng* advises people to simplify (*sǔn,* diminish, decrease). According to a free translation by the present-day master Ni Hua-Ching:

> Learning builds daily accumulation,
> but the practice of the *dào* (way) of spiritual integration
> with the subtle essence of the universe
> builds daily simplification.
>
> Simplify *(sǔn)* and simplify *(sǔn),* until all contamination
> from relative, contradictory thinking is eliminated.
> Then one does nothing, yet nothing is left undone.
>
> One who wins the world does so by not meddling with it.
> One who meddles with the world loses it.
>
> *Dàodé jīng 48, CWLT p.66*

In order to eliminate confusion, master Sīmǎ Chéngzhēn (C8th) counsels simplicity and disentanglement from a multiplicity of unnecessary things:

> If one is physically restless, how can one ever attain the *Dào?* Therefore, it is important for anyone who cultivates the *Dào (xiūdào)* to assess and simplify things. By recognizing priorities and gauging their relative importance, he can determine what to address and what to disregard, abandoning all unnecessary and insignificant things. For instance, having meat to eat and wine to drink, dressing in silk, enjoying a lofty personal reputation and official position, or possessing fine jades and wealth – these are all entirely superfluous gratification of passions and desires. They are not good medicines that benefit life. People hanker after these things and bring loss and failure upon themselves, but when you stop and think about it, are they not all a terrible delusion *(mí)?*
>
> The *Zhuāngzǐ* says, "Those who understand the true nature of life do not bother with things that life can do without."[3] "Things that life can do without" means things that are unnecessary.
>
> A vegetarian diet *(shūshí)* and old clothes are sufficient to support your (original) nature and (true spiritual) life *(xìngmìng).* What need is there to depend on wine, meat, and silk for life to feel complete? So whatever is unnecessary to sustain life must be rejected. What is superfluous to the needs of life must be relinquished.
>
> Possessions are detrimental to energy. Accumulation of them is harmful to people. Even a few possessions are a burden, let alone many. It would be laughable to try and shoot down a sparrow from a thousand feet with a precious jewel – even more so, to turn against the *Dào* and its nature (*dé,* character), neglect one's (original) nature and (true spiritual) life, and attend to non-necessities, thereby hastening self-destruction.

> If we compare fame and fortune to *Dào* and its nature *(dé),* fame and fortune are false and worthless, while *Dào* and its nature *(dé)* are real and precious. To determine what to keep and what to reject, come to know the worth of things, so that the self is not harmed by fame, and one's (spiritual) determination is not affected by status. The *Zhuāngzǐ* says, "One who loses himself by engagement in fame is not a commendable person."[4] The *Scripture on Western Ascension* says, "Embrace the Origin *(bàoyuán),* keep your attention on the One *(shǒuyī),* and rise up to immortality. But for as long as you cling to honour and official position, you will be unable to dwell on It."[5]
>
> Attending to everything that comes along without discrimination will burden the mind and dull your intelligence; and cultivation of the *Dào* will be neglected. But one who deals with things in a serene and detached manner automatically belongs to those who have attained realization.
>
> *Sīmǎ Chéngzhēn, Zuòwàng lùn 4, DZ1036 7b–8a, JY213*

1. *Tàipíng jīng 60, TJWM* p.104, *SGPT* p.243.
2. *Zhuāngzǐ* 10, *CTW* p.113.
3. *Zhuāngzǐ* 19.
4. *Zhuāngzǐ* 6.
5. *Xīshēng jīng* 7, *DZ666, JY84,* in *DZ726* 2:10b–11a; *cf. TMPS* p.239.

ḥurrīyah (A), **ḥurrīyat** (P) *Lit.* freedom, liberty, liberation, emancipation, deliverance; the state of being a free man *(ḥurr);* equivalent to the Persian, *āzādī;* in Sufism, freedom from materiality; freedom of one's inner being from attraction or bondage to all that is other than God, in whatever realm of the creation it may be, such that nothing other than God enters the heart;[1] the "ultimate stage of realization in worship":[2]

> Liberation *(ḥurrīyat)* in the view of the people of God is complete liberation *(āzādī)* from all that is other than God.
>
> *Shāh Niʿmat Allāh Valī, Rasā'il, RNV4 p.227, in SSE5 p.76*

> In the terminology of dwellers in Truth, freedom *(ḥurrīyah)* is a metaphor for shedding the bonds of existence and severing all ties with anything other than God.
>
> *Jurjānī, Taʿrīfāt, KTJ p.82; cf. in SSE5 pp.77–78*

Following the traditional Sufi tripartite division of spiritual aspirants, some Sufi systematizers have defined three stages of liberation:

> Liberation *(ḥurrīyat)* has three stages: liberation *(ḥurrīyat)* of the ordinary from enslavement to passions; liberation *(ḥurrīyat)* of the elect from enslavement to worldly aims through annihilation of one's will in that of God's; and liberation *(ḥurrīyat)* of the elect of the elect from enslavement to habits and influences through annihilation of their being in revelation of the Light of Lights.
>
> *Shāh Niʿmat Allāh Valī, Rasā'il, RNV4 p.39; cf. in SSE5 p.78*

The way to such freedom, says al-Ḥallāj, is complete surrender to the Divine:

> Whoever seeks freedom *(ḥurrīyah),* tell him to be constant in submission and devotion.
>
> *Al-Ḥallāj, in RQQQ p.109*

Tahānawī and al-Sarrāj summarize the many concurrent definitions provided by the Sufi systematizers:

> Liberation *(ḥurrīyah)* for the *ṣūfī* signifies the complete severance of consciousness from attachment to what is other than God. Thus, the devotee is at the station of liberation *(ḥurrīyah)* when he arrives at the point where no trace of worldly ambition remains, and he has no craving for either this world or the hereafter; for one is only devoted to what one is attached to.…
>
> Liberation *(ḥurrīyah)* is the ultimate stage of worship, and signifies the guidance of the devotee to the Source of His creation.
>
> *Tahānawī, Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn, KIFT1 p.398, in SSE5 p.77*

> Liberation *(ḥurrīyah)* refers to the final state of realization in worship to God, being that state where one owns nothing and is free because of devotion to God. It is related that Bishr said, "God created you free; so be as you have been created." …
>
> Junayd said, "The mystic's final stage is liberation *(ḥurrīyah).*"
>
> *Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj, Lumaʿ fī al-Taṣawwuf, KLTA p.373; cf. in SSE5 p.78*

Rūzbihān explains that the person who is truly free *(ḥurr)* has risen above all that is other than God:

> When a mystic, through perfect knowledge of the Divine, relinquishes slavery to the mind *(nafs),* its wants and desires, and when by gnosis he reaches the level of absorption in God's countenance, and of intimacy with Him, and fears all that is other than God, then he becomes free *(ḥurr)* from slavery *('ubūdīyah)* to and admiration of the mind

> *(nafs).* Then he becomes a true slave *(ʿabd)* (of God). And when he reaches the level of witnessing His Attributes, and becomes one with them, he has reached the level of Godhood. Then he will drink his fill of the pure cup of the wine of love, unadulterated by human pleasures, and becomes truly free *(ḥurr),* stripped of the shell of external practices. . . .
>
> Al-ʿĀrif (the gnostic, al-Ḥallāj) said: "The liberated one *(ḥurr)* is he who, attaining transcendence through God's help, sheds every ingrained habit."
>
> *Rūzbihān, Mashrab al-Arwāḥ 8:22, MARB p.158; cf. in SSE5 pp.73–74*

Ḥurrīyah is also included in Abū al-Ḥasan Nūrī's definition of Sufism: "Sufism is liberty *(ḥurrīyat).*" This, says Hujwīrī, is "so that a man should be freed from the bonds of desire".[3]

Discussing the state of spiritual freedom *(ḥurrīyah),* Ibn al-ʿArabī observes that nothing in created existence is free, since everything is in relationship to other created things ("correlations"), and has no absolute, independent or free existence of its own:

> In reality, there is no existing entity that possesses freedom *(ḥurrīyah),* since the correlations *(iḍāfāt)* prevent that. The reality of freedom *(ḥurrīyah)* is found only in the fact that the Essence is "independent of the worlds",[4] even though the cosmos becomes manifest from It and through It, not through anything else. Since the Essence is "independent of the worlds," It is free, while the cosmos is poor and needy toward it. The creatures of the cosmos have no freedom *(ḥurrīyah)* whatsoever. They are commanded by the Divinity through the properties It has prescribed for them, properties without which the Divinity would have no manifestation; hence, correlations become manifest. Therefore, the situation is dependent *(mawqūf)* from two sides, each side depending upon the other. So it is impossible for freedom *(ḥurrīyah)* to subsist in either of the correlatives.
>
> *Ibn al-ʿArabī, Meccan Revelations 2:502.33, FMIA4 (3:214) p.197; cf. SPK pp.60–61*

See also: **āzād**.

1. See also al-Qushayrī, *Risālah, RQQQ* p.109.
2. Aḥmad Khaḍrūyah, in *Tadhkirat al-Awliyāʾ* 1, *TAN1* p.293; Rūzbihān, *Mashrab al-Arwāḥ* 8:22, *MARB* p.156.
3. Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-Maḥjūb* III, *KMM* p.48; *cf. KM* p.43.
4. *Qurʾān* 3:97.

hushyārī (P) *Lit.* prudence, sobriety; in Sufism, both the illusory sobriety of the intellect and living sensibly in this world, as well as the state of the mystic upon his return to normal waking consciousness after experiencing the inward intoxication of love:

> The term *(hushyārī)* is meant to convey the restoration of a wayfarer's awareness and his return to sobriety *(ṣaḥw)* after having become insensible and unconscious of his limited self-existence, through subjugation of his individual qualities and faculties (in both their internal and external aspects) to the decree and dominion of the King of love.
>
> *Mir'āt-i ʿUshshāq, in TAT p.236; cf. in SSE1 p.211*

See also: **mastī**, **ṣaḥw**, **sukr**.

ilhām (A/P) *Lit.* inspiration, intuition; a prompting from God; one of the terms used for experiences of contact with the Divine, others being *waḥy* (revelation), *kashf* (unveiling), and *tajallī* (effulgence, revelation):

> Inspiration *(ilhām)* is an infusion from the Unseen. It enters the heart of the mystic and calls upon him to perform a divinely directed act without providing a rationale from an outward sign or Quranic verse.
>
> *Shāh Niʿmat Allāh Valī, Rasā'il, RNV3 p.179; cf. in SSE8 p.50*

> Inspiration *(ilhām)* is incited in the heart by the flow of grace. It has been said that it is a kind of knowledge that descends into the heart and motivates the individual to perform an action without requiring a reason, an outward sign, or Quranic decree. The validity of this type of inspiration *(ilhām)* is accepted only by *ṣūfīs,* being rejected by religious scholars.
>
> *Jurjānī, Taʿrīfāt, KTJ p.37, in SSE8 p.51*

While revelation *(waḥy)* is that which was given to Muḥammad and the prophets and which is the primary source of all revelation, *ilhām* is more related to the individual, and as such can be confused with promptings from the *nafs* (lower mind). Its authenticity is therefore uncertain:

> Inspiration *(ilhām)* is a divine inciting in the heart, while temptation *(waswasah)* is Satan's inciting in the breast. Temptation *(waswasah)* indicates conformity with the *nafs* (lower mind), spiritual influence conformity with knowledge, and inspiration *(ilhām)* conformity with God.
>
> *Bābā Ṭāhir Hamadānī, in SKQ pp.367–68, in SSE8 p.52*

> Murtaʿish said, "Temptation *(waswasah)* leads to bewilderment while inspiration *(ilhām)* leads to increased understanding and clarification."
>
> *Sulamī, Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah, KTS p.358, in SSE8 p.52*

Also emphasizing the personal and uncertain nature of *ilhām,* Hujwīrī writes that there are those who

> declare that gnosis is the result of inspiration *(ilhām).* This … is impossible, because gnosis supplies a criterion for distinguishing truth from falsehood, whereas the inspired have no such criterion. If someone says, "I know by inspiration *(ilhām)* that God is in space," and someone else says, "I know by inspiration *(ilhām)* that He is not in space," one of these contradictory statements must be true, but a proof is necessary in order to decide where the truth lies.
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb XV, KMM p.348; cf. KM p.271*

He also tells a story to exemplify the same point:

> On one occasion Abū Saʿīd set out from Nīshāpūr towards Ṭūs. While he was passing through a mountainous ravine his feet felt cold in his boots. A dervish who was then with him says: "I thought of tearing my waistband into two halves and wrapping them round his feet; but I could not bring myself to do it, as my waistband was a very fine one.
>
> When we arrived at Ṭūs, I attended his meeting and asked him to tell me the difference between suggestions *(waswās)* of the devil and divine inspiration *(ilhām).* He answered: "It was a divine inspiration *(ilhām)* that urged you to tear your waistband into two pieces for the sake of warming my feet; and it was a suggestion *(waswās)* from the devil that hindered you from doing so." He performed a great many miracles of this kind, which are wrought by spiritual adepts.
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb XII, KMM pp.207–8; cf. KM pp.165–66*

See also: **tanzīl** (3.1), **waḥy**.

illumination Spiritually, illumination of the soul, either metaphorically, implying increased awareness of the Divine, or actually, referring to the perception of spiritual light within; an enhanced spiritual understanding; flooding of the soul with the perception of spiritual light; enlightenment; an aspect of all mystical traditions, East or West, past or present.

Many mystics have spoken of the inner light; some have also described their personal experiences, for inward illumination is a characteristic aspect

of mystic experience. Thus, the fathers whose writings are collected together in the *Philokalia* speak clearly of the divine light that floods the soul:

> The pure soul, because of its innate goodness, is illumined and made resplendent by God; and then the mind *(nous)* apprehends what is good and begets thoughts that accord with God's will.
>
> *Anon., On the Virtuous Life 52, Philokalia; cf. PCT1 p.337*

Spiritual light is as necessary for the soul's inner vision as is the sun's light for the physical eyes to see:

> Just as it is impossible for the eye to perceive sensible objects without the light of the sun, so the human mind *(nous)* cannot engage in spiritual contemplation *(theōria pneumatikē)* without the light of the Spirit. For physical light naturally illuminates the senses so that they may perceive physical bodies; while spiritual light illumines the mind *(nous)* so that it can engage in contemplation *(theōria)* and thus grasp what lies beyond the senses.
>
> *Maximos the Confessor, On Theology 17, Philokalia; cf. PCT2 p.239*

Yet apprehension of this light is not something the soul can do on its own. It requires the grace of God:

> A soul can never attain the knowledge of God unless God Himself in His condescension takes hold of it and raises it up to Himself. For the human mind *(nous)* lacks the power to ascend and to participate in divine illumination, unless God Himself draws it up – insofar as this is possible for the human mind *(nous)* – and illumines it with rays of divine light.
>
> *Maximos the Confessor, On Theology 1:31, Philokalia; cf. PCT2 p.120*

When the soul reaches perfection, it becomes entirely united with God, illumined by His light, and a recipient of mystical understanding:

> When the soul *(nous)* has been perfected, it unites wholly with God and is illumined by divine light, and the most hidden mysteries are revealed to it.
>
> *On Abba Philēmon, Philokalia; cf. PCT2 p.355*

Descriptions of the soul's inner illumination are to be found in many other mystical traditions. The unknown writer of the *Thanksgiving Hymns,* found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, speaks of the soul being eternally illumined:

Thou hast caused the straying spirit to return
that it may enter into a covenant with Thee;
And stand before Thee forever
in the everlasting abode;
Illumined with perfect light forever,
with no more darkness,
for unending seasons of joy
and unnumbered ages of peace.

Thanksgiving Hymns 24:25–30, CDSV p.299

The Neoplatonist, Plotinus, speaks of the creative process as one of successive illumination or irradiation from the highest divine Principle. Thus, the Supreme gives rise to the *Nous* (Intelligence), the *Nous* to the Essential Soul, the Essential Soul to Nature, the whole outpouring or irradiation being orchestrated by the *Logos.*[1] Throughout the Hermetic texts, God is again the source of light and life, illuminating mind and soul, the *Logos* being the mediating power.

In Manichaean literature, the saviour is the illuminator or enlightener. As a Manichaean Coptic psalm says of Jesus: "When I seek you, I find you within, illumining me."[2] Among the Mandaean texts, the supreme Being is called by a number of names, including Great Life and *Zihrun* ('Radiance'). His light and radiance illumine all the worlds *(shkinatas):*

Illumined and illuminating is the Great Mystery of radiance,
Zihrun, a crown of radiance, light and glory,
from whom a flow of Living Water
streamed out to the *shkinatas* (dwellings).

Mandaean Prayer Book 3, CPM pp.2–3

See also: **enlightenment**, **light** (8.2).

1. Plotinus, *Enneads* 2:3:17, *PEC* p.49, *passim.*
2. *Manichaean Psalm Book; cf. MPB* p.151.

ʿilm (A/P) *Lit.* knowledge, science, learning, wisdom, doctrine, theory; all forms of knowledge, including science, philosophy, theology, religious law *(fiqh),* grammar *(naḥw),* and so on; all knowledge related to the visible, material world, and accessible through the five physical senses; also, mystical knowledge *(maʿrifah).* The term appears in a great many contexts, referring to the numerous kinds of knowledge. Al-Jīlī observes that knowledge is associated with life: whatever lives has knowledge,[1] even animals and invertebrates

remember aspects of their environment and so on, as well as being endowed with instinctive knowledge concerned with being the creature they are.

According to a number of *ḥadīth,* Muḥammad had a high regard for knowledge: "The search for knowledge *(ʿilm)* is incumbent upon every Muslim;"[2] "Seek knowledge *(ʿilm),* even unto China;"[3] "Knowledge *(ʿilm)* is a light which God causes to descend into the heart of whomsoever He will;" and, "Knowledge *(ʿilm)* without practice *(ʿamal)* is like a tree without fruit."[4] In traditional Islam, knowledge is that which is revealed in the *Qurʾān,* and practice means following the *sharīʿah* (Muslim religious law).

While *ʿilm* can refer to all forms of knowledge, worldly or mystical, Sufis have often referred to mystical knowledge *per se* as *maʿrifah* or *ʿirfān,* both meaning gnosis. In the *Qurʾān,* God is only said to possess *ʿilm,* and the term *maʿrifah* is not used. Even so, in a human context, many Sufis have described *maʿrifah* as higher than *ʿilm,* although some have also used *ʿilm* for mystical knowledge.

Ibn al-ʿArabī generally uses both terms interchangeably, though he also explains that those Sufis who regard *maʿrifah* as superior to *ʿilm* are referring to the knowledge implied by the Quranic verse: "Be godfearing, and God will teach you."[5] Taking a broad perspective, he maintains that since everything ultimately comes from God, so too does all knowledge – worldly or divine:

> The root of every knowledge *(ʿilm)* derives from knowledge of the divine things *(ʿilm al-ilāhī),* since 'everything other than God' derives from God. . . .
>
> Everything in engendered existence must be supported by divine realities and comprised within knowledge of the divine things *(ʿilm al-ilāhī)* from which all knowledge *(ʿilm)* branches out.
>
> *Ibn al-ʿArabī, Meccan Revelations 1:170:8, 1:293.5,*
> *FMIA1 (1:21, 60) pp.259, 441, SPK p.150*

He acknowledges, however, that for most Sufis ("the tribe"), *maʿrifah* is knowledge gained through spiritual practice, not through discursive reasoning, which is always open to confusion:

> For the tribe, *maʿrifah* is a path. Hence, any knowledge *(ʿilm)* which can be gained only through practice, godfearingness, and wayfaring is *maʿrifah,* since it derives from a verified unveiling which is not surrounded by obfuscation. This contrasts with the knowledge *(ʿilm)* which is gained through reflective consideration *(al-naẓar al-fikrī),* which is never safe from obfuscation and bewilderment.
>
> *Ibn al-ʿArabī, Meccan Revelations 2:297.33,*
> *FMIA3 (2:177) pp.447–48; cf. SPK p.149*

He adds, too, that the Sufi debate concerning *maʿrifah* and *ʿilm* is often a matter of definition and individual meaning. Some Sufis refer to inner mystical knowledge as *ʿilm,* others as *maʿrifah.*[6]

Speaking of the deep quietness and inner enlightenment of meditation performed by the "wise", Rūmī describes divine knowledge *(ʿilm)* as a boundless "ocean", in which the mystic seeker never becomes "weary":

> The sleep of the wise *(ʿālim)*
> is better than (the external) worship (of the ignorant),
> if such a wisdom *(ʿilm)* brings spiritual awakening.
> The quietness of the (expert) swimmer in swimming
> is better than the exertion of hands and feet
> of he who cannot swim.
> He that cannot swim waves his hands and feet about, and drowns,
> while the swimmer moves quietly, as steadfast as a pillar.
> Knowledge *(ʿilm)* is an ocean without bound or shore:
> the seeker of knowledge *(ṭālib-i ʿilm)* is a diver in those seas.
> Though his life be a thousand years,
> he will never become weary of seeking.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī VI:3878–82; cf. MJR6 pp.471–72*

Consequently, Sufis assert the futility of worldly knowledge in the quest for inner realization. Rūmī again remarks:

> Though the scholar may know the minutiae of knowledge *(ʿilm),*
> those eyes that see the Unseen *(dīdah-ʾi Ghayb)*
> will not be opened by that means.
> For the scholar sees nothing but a turban and beard (the externals),
> and must ask a teacher. . . .
> But the knower of God can *(ʿārif)* see things for himself,
> for he is the rising light.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī VI:261–63; cf. MJR6 p.272*

Sufis contrast the knowledge of this world – sometimes called *ʿilm al-ẓāhir* (manifest or external knowledge), *ʿilm al-rasmī* (conventional knowledge), or *ʿilm al-rusūm* (ordinary knowledge) – with the higher, divine or mystic knowledge, which is denoted by terms such as *ʿilm al-bāṭin* (inner or esoteric knowledge), *ʿilm al-taḥqīqī* (realized knowledge), *ʿilm al-ladunnī* (knowledge gained from the presence of God), *ʿilm billāh* (knowledge of God), *ʿilm al-ilāhī* (divine knowledge), *ʿilm al-adyān* (sg. *dīn,* knowledge of religion or spirituality), *ʿilm al-kashf* (revelatory knowledge), *ʿilm al-ākhirah* (knowledge of the hereafter), *ʿilm al-dil* (knowledge of the heart), and *ʿilm al-qalb* (knowledge of the heart). They say that *ʿilm* of this world is not only useless in the mystic path

to inward realization, but it can actually be an obstacle. Rūmī contrasts it with the lofty or "sublime knowledge *('ilm-i baland)*" gained by mystical experience:

> The knowledge *('ilm)* of the followers of the senses
> has become a muzzle, so that such people
> should not receive milk (sustenance)
> from that sublime knowledge *('ilm-i baland).*
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī I:1016, MJR2 p.57*

In another passage, he contrasts the knowledge of the "body" with the knowledge of the "heart", the "heart" being a Sufi metaphor for the soul or inner being:

> The knowledge *('ilm)* of men of heart *(ahl-i dil)* lifts them up:
> the knowledge *('ilm)* of men of body *(ahl-i tan)* is a burden to them.
> When knowledge *('ilm)* strikes on the heart *(dil),*
> it becomes a friend *(yār);*
> When knowledge *('ilm)* strikes on the body,
> it becomes a burden *(bār).*
> God has said, "Like an ass laden with his books":[7]
> burdensome is the knowledge *('ilm)* that is not from Himself.
> The knowledge *('ilm)* that is not from Himself does not endure,
> like the makeup of a lady's maid.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī I:3446–49; cf. MJR2 pp.187–88*

Hujwīrī similarly contrasts the two kinds of knowledge:

> Knowledge *('ilm)* is of two kinds: human and divine. The former is worthless in comparison with the latter, because God's knowledge *('ilm-i Khudāvand)* is an attribute of Himself, subsisting in Him, whose attributes are infinite; whereas our knowledge *('ilm)* is an attribute of ourselves, subsisting in us, whose attributes are finite. Knowledge *('ilm)* has been defined as "comprehension and investigation of the object known", but the best definition of it is this: "A quality whereby the ignorant are made wise". God's knowledge *('ilm)* is that by which He knows all things existent and nonexistent. He does not share it with man; it is not capable of division nor separable from Himself. . . . The divine knowledge *('ilm)* penetrates what is hidden and comprehends what is manifest.
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb I, KMM p.13, KM pp.12–13*

Among the Sufis, knowledge that can be learned from books is called *'ilm al-taqlīdī* (imitative knowledge), in contrast with *'ilm al-taḥqīqī* (realized

knowledge). Speaking of realized or inner knowledge, Rūmī likens it to a bird with two wings, compared to the one-winged bird of speculative knowledge, of "*ẓann* (opinion)" or *gumān* (surmise, opinion, supposition, imagination, conceit). While "opinion" leads only to doubt, mystical knowledge leads to complete certainty, however much others may scoff:

> Knowledge *(ʿilm)* has two wings, opinion *(gumān)* one wing:
> opinion *(ẓann)* is defective and curtailed in flight.
> The one-winged bird soon falls headlong:
> then again it flies up some two paces or a little more.
> The bird, opinion *(gumān),* falling and rising,
> goes on with one wing in hope of reaching the nest.
> But when he has been delivered from opinion *(ẓann),*
> knowledge *(ʿilm)* shows its face to him:
> That one-winged bird becomes two-winged and spreads its wings.
>
> After that he walks erect and straight,
> not falling flat on his face or ailing.
> He flies aloft with two wings, like Gabriel,
> without opinion *(gumān),* and without peradventure,
> and without disputation.
> If all the world should say to him,
> "You are on the way of God and are following the right religion,"
> he will not be made more fervent by their words:
> His lonely soul will not mate with them;
>
> And if they all should say to him:
> "You are astray; you think you are a mountain,
> but actually you are a blade of straw,"
> he will not fall into doubt *(gumān)* because of their taunts,
> he will not be grieved by their estrangement from him.
> Nay, if seas and mountains should come to speech
> and should say to him, "You are wedded to perdition,"
> not in the least will he fall into fantasy or sickness
> on account of the taunts of the scoffers.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī III:1510–21, MJR4 p.85*

The same idea is conveyed in the *Qurʾān:*

> But they have no knowledge *(ʿilm)* therein.
> They follow nothing but conjecture *(al-ẓann):*
> and conjecture *(al-ẓann)* avails nothing against Truth.
>
> *Qurʾān 53:28, AYA*

When it comes to the many forms of knowledge, a spiritual seeker can benefit from simplicity:

> Ḥātim al-Aṣamm said: "I have chosen four things to know, and have discarded all other knowledge *(ʿilm).*"
>
> He was asked: "What are they?"
>
> "One," he answered, "is this: I know that my daily bread is apportioned to me, and will neither be increased nor diminished; consequently I have ceased seeking to augment it. Secondly, I know that I owe to God a debt that no other person can pay instead of me; therefore I am occupied with paying it. Thirdly, I know that there is one pursuing me (*i.e.* death) from whom I cannot escape; accordingly I have prepared myself to meet him. Fourthly, I know that God is observing me; therefore I am ashamed to do what I ought not."
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb I, KMM p.14; cf. KM p.13*

See also: **gnōsis**, **ʿilm al-ladunnī**, **ʿilm al-maʿrifah**, **ʿilm-i ahl-i dil**, **ʿirfān**, **jñāna**, **maʿrifah**, **yaqīn**, **ẓann**.

1. See R.A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism, SIM* p.101.
2. *Ḥadīth* 1:4.2.37, in *HMM1* p.353.
3. *Ḥadīth* 1:4.2.111, in *HMM1* p.363.
4. *Ḥadīth,* in *SPL* p.10.
5. *Qurʾān* 2:282.
6. Ibn al-ʿArabī, *Meccan Revelations* 2:318.30, *FMIA3* (2:177) pp.478–79, *SPK* p.149.
7. *Qurʾān* 62:5.

ʿilm al-Ḥaqq (A), **ʿilm-i Ḥaqq** (P) *Lit.* knowledge *(ʿilm)* of the Truth *(Ḥaqq);* knowledge of the Reality; knowledge of God, since *al-Ḥaqq* is commonly used as a name for God; the highest mystical knowledge; God-realization.

See also: **al-Ḥaqq** (2.1), **jñāna**.

ʿilm al-ladunnī, **ʿilm min ladun**, **min ladunnā ʿilma** (A), **ʿilm-i ladunnī** (P) *Lit.* knowledge *(ʿilm)* from the presence *(ladunnī);* knowledge that arises from being in the presence of God; thus, knowledge derived from mystical experience; esoteric or mystic knowledge. The term originates in the *Qurʾān,* where Moses and the Israelites meet with an unnamed holy man ("one of our servants"), traditionally believed to have been the mythical Khiḍr:

So they found one of our servants,
on whom We had bestowed mercy from ourselves,
and whom We had taught
knowledge from our own Presence *(ʿilm min ladun).*

Qur'ān 18:65, AYA

Rūmī indicates that this is the knowledge revealed to Muḥammad, when he has one of the characters in his *Maśnavī* speak of "Muḥammad, to whom belong the gifts of divine knowledge *(ʿilm-i ladunnī)*".[1] He also contrasts *ʿilm-i ladunnī* with external knowledge:

The more perfect he is in (worldly) knowledge *(hunar),*
the more backward he is in reality
and the more forward in appearance. . . .
This company (*i.e.* of the mystics) has washed their hearts
of external kinds of knowledge *(dānish),*
because this knowledge *(dānish)* does not know the (mystic) path.
For this, you need a knowledge *(dānish)* whose root is yonder,
inasmuch as every branch is a guide to its root.
How can every wing fly across the broad expanse of the sea?
Only mystic knowledge *(ʿilm-i ladunnī)*
will bear you to the divine Presence.

Rūmī, Maśnavī III:1117, 1123–25; cf. MJR4 pp.63–64

See also: **ʿilm**, **ʿilm al-taḥqīqī**.

1. Rūmī, *Maśnavī* I:813; *cf. MJR2* p.46.

ʿilm al-maʿrifah (A), **ʿilm-i maʿrifat** (P) *Lit.* science *(ʿilm)* of gnosis *(maʿrifah);* divine knowledge; refers both to intellectual, theological knowledge or understanding of the Divine, as well as to actual mystical experience and knowledge. *Maʿrifah* means cognition, knowledge and gnosis, implying mystical or inner knowledge of God.

Hujwīrī quotes Muḥammad ibn Faḍl al-Balkhī as identifying three forms of knowledge: mystical knowledge *(ʿilm-i maʿrifat),* knowledge of Islamic religious law *(ʿilm-i sharīʿat)* and knowledge of the stations *(ʿilm-i maqāmāt)* or stages on the spiritual path. He expresses his belief that all three are necessary:

> Muḥammad ibn Faḍl al-Balkhī says: knowledge *(ʿilm)* is of three kinds – *from* God, *with* God, and *of* God. Knowledge *of* God *(ʿilm billāh)* is the science of gnosis *(ʿilm-i maʿrifat),* whereby He is

known to all His prophets and saints. It cannot be acquired by ordinary means, but is the result of divine guidance and information. Knowledge *from* God *(ʿilm min Allāh)* is the science of the sacred law *(ʿilm-i sharīʿat),* which He has commanded and made obligatory upon us. Knowledge *with* God *(ʿilm maʿa Allāh)* is the science of the stations *(ʿilm-i maqāmāt)* and the path and the degrees of the saints. True gnosis cannot be attained without the acceptance of the law, and the law is not practised rightly unless the stations *(maqāmāt)* are manifested.

Muḥammad ibn Faḍl al-Balkhī, in Kashf al-Maḥjūb I, KMM pp.18–19; cf. KM p.16

See also: **maʿrifah**.

ʿ**ilm al-safīnah** (A), ʿ**ilm-i safīnah** (P) *Lit.* knowledge *(ʿilm)* from a notebook *(safīnah);* book knowledge, including holy books; intellectual, theological and acquired knowledge, as opposed to *ʿilm al-sīnah* (knowledge of the breast, knowledge of the heart, mystic knowledge).

See also: ʿ**ilm**, **jñāna**.

ʿ**ilm al-taḥqīqī** (A), ʿ**ilm-i taḥqīqī** (P) *Lit.* verified *(taḥqīqī)* knowledge *(ʿilm);* realized knowledge; true or real knowledge; *taḥqīqī* is derived from the same root as *Ḥaqq* (Reality, Truth, God), and refers to the search for and verification of divine Truth; contrasted with *ʿilm al-taqlīdī* (imitative knowledge), which is knowledge derived from books and learning:

Imitative knowledge *(ʿilm-i taqlīdī)* is only for self-advertisement:
when it finds a purchaser, it glows with delight.
The purchaser of real knowledge *(ʿilm-i taḥqīqī)* is God:
its market is always flourishing.

Rūmī, Maśnavī II:3265–66; cf. MJR2 p.391

See also: ʿ**ilm**, ʿ**ilm al-ladunnī**, **taḥqīq**.

ʿ**ilm al-taqlīdī** (A), ʿ**ilm-i taqlīdī** (P) *Lit.* knowledge *(ʿilm)* based upon an authority *(taqlīd);* knowledge based upon precedent; imitative knowledge, knowledge learnt about the divine mysteries through books, discussions, and schools; the converse of *ʿilm al-taḥqīqī* (realized knowledge, mystical knowledge). See **taqlīd**.

ʿilm al-yaqīn (A/P) See **yaqīn**.

ʿilm-i ahl-i dil, **ʿulūm-i anbiyā'** (P) *Lit.* knowledge *(ʿilm,* pl. *ʿulūm)* of the men *(ahl)* of heart *(dil)* or prophets *(anbiyā');* knowledge of the mystics; mystical knowledge. Rūmī says that such knowledge does not come from books, but from within the heart (soul). It is not a knowledge conveyed in words, but a knowledge of the Reality named by those words:

> Have you ever plucked a rose *(gul)*
> from the letters *gāf* and *lām* of *gul? . . .*
> Know that the moon is on high,
> not (its reflection) in the water of the stream.
> If you would pass beyond name and letter,
> O make yourself wholly purged of self. . . .
> Like polished iron, lose your rusty colour:
> in your spiritual discipline, become like a mirror without rust.
> Make yourself pure from the attributes of self,
> that you may see your own pure untarnished essence,
> and see within your heart
> the knowledge of the mystics *('ulūm-i anbiyā'),*
> without book and without preceptor or teacher.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī I:3456–61; cf. MJR2 p.188*

See also: **ahl al-qalb** (7.1).

ʿilm-i sīnah (P) *Lit.* knowledge *(ʿilm)* of the breast *(sīnah);* knowledge of the heart; knowledge of the soul; mystic knowledge.

See also: **ʿilm**, **jñāna**.

imtizāj (A/P) *Lit.* mingled, commingled; commixture, incorporation; *imtizāj* refers to the idea that the divine lover becomes so thoroughly 'mingled' with God that, while living in a transient body, he is also God. Like the doctrines of *ḥulūl* (incarnation) and *ittiḥād* (unification), *imtizāj* was condemned by orthodox Islam. The idea that God could incarnate *(ḥāll)* in His creature, or could become one *(ittiḥād)* with His creature or that the divine and eternal could be mingled *(imtizāj)* with the phenomenal was regarded as heresy both by orthodox Islam and by many Sufis. ʿIrāqī and other Sufis have pointed out that since creation is an expression or manifestation of the Divine, He is present in all things like an image in a mirror. There is therefore no essential

separation between God and any created thing, and therefore no question of God incarnating in man *(ḥulūl),* becoming one *(ittiḥād)* with human nature[1] or co-mingling with human nature *(imtizāj).*

The Indian Sufi, ʿInāyat Khān, also says that Indian mystics have characteristically been described as incarnations *(avatārs)* of a deity, because this is a concept that people could readily understand. In the Middle East, however, even the prophetic claim aroused such opposition that it became difficult for the saints to carry out their mission. They were therefore described as the messengers of God, the friends of God, and so on. In fact, they are actually saying the same thing, albeit using different metaphors.[2]

See also: **ḥulūl**, **ittiḥād**.

1. ʿIrāqī, *Divine Flashes* 11, *DF* pp.93, 145–46.
2. ʿInāyat Khān, *Sufi Message, SMIK1* pp.32–34, *SMIK9* pp.147–48.

inner fire, **inner heat**, **inner warmth** Physical heat or warmth, sometimes experienced in the region of the heart during contemplation or meditation, and often associated with inner sweetness and feelings of love and devotion; also, metaphorically, the intensity of the fire of love and longing for the Divine; also called spiritual heat, spiritual fire, or spiritual warmth.

Probably the best-known and evocative description of this inner warmth is found in Richard Rolle's introduction to his *Fire of Love:*

> I cannot tell you how surprised I was when I first felt my heart begin to warm. It was real warmth, too, not in the imagination, and it felt as if it were actually on fire. I was astonished at the way the heat surged up, and how this new sensation brought great and unexpected comfort. Because of my ignorance of it, I kept feeling my breast to make sure it had no physical cause! But once I understood that it was kindled entirely from an inner, spiritual source, and that this fire had no origin in carnal desire, then I realized that it was the gift of my Maker, and I longed for yet greater joy and spiritual sweetness, for that spiritual flame brought great comfort to my soul. Before I was flooded with this comforting heat, I could never have thought that we exiles could have known such warmth, so sweet was the devotion that it kindled. It set my soul aglow as if a real fire were burning there.
>
> *Richard Rolle, Fire of Love, Prologue; cf. FLML p.11, FLRR p.45*

He adds that "frail human affection" and "carnal, sordid things that beguile a mind at peace" can rob him for some time of this comforting warmth, which later reappears:

> Because of such things, this cheering warmth is absent for a while; but, in time, it once more appears. But until it comes again I am bereft, dwelling in great spiritual coldness, for I am missing the spiritual fire to which I have become accustomed, and which my whole being – body and soul – so much approves.
>
> *Richard Rolle, Fire of Love, Prologue; cf. FLML p.12, FLRR p.46*

Later in the book, he speaks of another similar experience of warmth, associated with "heavenly, spiritual sound" and the "sweetness of unheard melody":

> I was sitting in a certain chapel, delighting greatly in the sweetness of prayer or meditation, when suddenly I felt within myself an unusually pleasant heat. At first, I wondered where it came from, but it was not long before I realized that it did not come from any of His creatures, but from my Creator Himself; and I found that it grew hotter and more joyful than I had ever known. For it was a little more than nine months since an unexpected and sweet-smelling warmth had consciously kindled in me, and I had experienced an inward flooding of heavenly, spiritual sound – sound that belongs to the songs of eternal praise and to the sweetness of unheard melody; sound that cannot be known or heard save by him who receives it, and who himself must be purified and detached from earthly things.
>
> *Richard Rolle, Fire of Love 15; cf. FLML (1:15) pp.70–71, FLRR p.93*

Throughout his book, Rolle writes of the intense "fire of love" for God that burns within him, and which he describes as a "flame, which metaphorically I call 'fire', because it burns and enlightens".[1] He is referring both to the inner intensity of love as well as to the sensation of warmth or heat that such love engendered in him:

> I call it heat when the mind is truly ablaze with eternal love, and the heart similarly feels itself burning with a love that is not imaginary but real. For a heart set on fire produces a feeling of burning love. . . .
>
> I long for love, the fairest of flowers, and inwardly burn with its fiery flame. Would that I might be free from dwelling in this place of exile! The heat is such that no one can imagine it unless he has experienced its comfort for himself. . . .
>
> Sweet love and a devout heart so dissolve in the divine sweetness that the will of man is made one with the will of God in a wonderful friendship. In this union there is poured into the loving soul such sweetness of warmth, delight and song that he who experiences it is quite unable to describe it.
>
> *Richard Rolle, Fire of Love 14, 16, 17;*
> *cf. FLML (1:14, 16, 17) pp.67, 76, 80, FLRR pp.89, 97, 100–1*

Rolle was not alone. Thérèse of Lisieux describes a similar experience:

> I felt myself suddenly pierced by a dart of fire, so ardent I thought I should die. I do not know how to explain this transport; no comparison can describe the intensity of that flame. It seemed as though an invisible force plunged me wholly into fire.... But Oh, what fire! What sweetness!
>
> *Thérèse of Lisieux, Story of a Soul, Epilogue; cf. TLSS p.195*

The experience of warmth or fire in the region of the physical heart is a not uncommon effect of the Jesus prayer, the mental repetition of a short prayer with the attention fixed in the heart, as practised in the Orthodox tradition:

> When the fire descends into the heart, it revives prayer. And when prayer has risen and ascended to heaven, then the descent of the fire takes place into the cenacle (upper room) of the soul.
>
> *John Klimakos, Ladder of Ascent 28, in OPJ p.68*

Maximus Kapsokalivitis describes something similar:

> From my youth, I had great faith in my Lady, the Mother of God, and besought her with tears to grant me the grace of mental prayer. Once I came to her temple as usual and fervently prayed to her for this. I went up to her icon and reverently kissed her image. Suddenly, I felt as if there fell into my breast and heart a warmth which did not burn, but bedewed and delighted me, and stirred my soul to compunction. From that moment my heart began to delight in the remembrance of my Jesus and the Mother of God and to have Him, the Lord Jesus, constantly within itself. Since then the prayer has never ceased in my heart.
>
> *Maximus Kapsokalivitis, Philokalia, PP5 p.104, in OPJ p.68*

The author of the well-known *Way of a Pilgrim,* speaking of his own practice of the Jesus prayer, also writes:

> There came into my heart a gracious warmth which spread through my whole breast.
>
> *Way of a Pilgrim, WPW p.20*

And again:

> I felt a pain in my heart, and then a most delightful warmth, as well as consolation and peace. This aroused me still more and spurred me

> on more and more to give great care to the saying of the prayer so that all my thoughts were taken up with it and I felt a very great joy.
>
> *Way of a Pilgrim, WPW p.41*

He also speaks of

> the pleasant warmth of the heart, fullness of delight in all one's limbs, the joyous 'bubbling' in the heart, lightness and courage, the joy of living, power not to feel sickness and sorrow.
>
> *Way of a Pilgrim, WPW p.42*

Rolle writes that although the sensation of heat may appear to be physical, in fact, it is not. Conversely, speaking of the Jesus prayer, Bishop Theophan mentions the "feeling of warmth which develops in and around the heart as the effect of this prayer", going on to say that this warmth is physical and bodily:

> The question now arises whether this warmth is spiritual. No, it is not spiritual. It is ordinary physical warmth. But since it keeps the attention of the mind in the heart, and thus helps the development there of the spiritual movements described earlier, it is called spiritual – provided that it is not accompanied by sensual pleasure, however slight, but keeps the soul and body in sober mood.
>
> *Theophan the Recluse, in APOA pp.94–95*

Reconciling the two viewpoints, Ignatius Brianchaninov explains that the physical warmth generated by the Jesus prayer gives way to a subtle, spiritual warmth:

> The more bodily exertion and effort an ascetic makes, the more violently the warmth of the blood is increased. And so it ought to be! In order to moderate this warmth and prevent its falling down, no special effort should be made to press the mind into the heart, the heart should not be overworked, and heat should not be produced by excessive holding of the breath and straining of the heart. On the contrary, the breathing must be checked gently, and the mind must be led into union with the heart very gently. We should try to ensure that the prayer acts in the very summit of the heart where the power of speech resides according to the teaching of the fathers, and where divine worship should therefore be performed.
>
> When divine grace overshadows the labour of prayer and begins to unite the mind with the heart, then material blood warmth completely vanishes. Then the sacred action of prayer undergoes a great change. It becomes as it were natural, perfectly light and free. Then there

> appears in the heart another warmth, subtle, immaterial, spiritual, which does not produce any excitement or burning. On the contrary, it cools, illumines, bedews, refreshes, and acts as a healing, spiritual, soothing unction; and it induces unutterable love for God and men. That is what St Maximus Kapsokalivitis says of this warmth from his own blessed experience.
>
> *Ignatius Brianchaninov, On the Prayer of Jesus 14, OPJ pp.110–11*

A fire in the heart is not uncommon in many forms of interior meditation. The biblical psalmist even mentions the experience:

> My heart grew warm within me,
> and a fire was kindled in my meditation.
>
> *Psalms 39:3, LXX*

Even those who have been unused to mystical experience have been confronted with the experience. In an extraordinary testament of mystical revelation and experience, the great French thinker and scholar, Pascal, wrote down on a scrap of paper, found after his death by a servant, sewn up in his doublet, a few ecstatic exclamations, which he seems to have worn ever after upon his person as a perpetual reminder of his otherwise undescribed and indescribable experience of the Divine. His precise meaning remains unclear:

> In the year of grace 1654. Monday November 23rd. . . .
> From half-past ten till half-past twelve, Fire!
> God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob.
> Not the God of philosophers and scholars!
> Certainty. Certainty. Feeling *(sentiment).* Joy. Peace.
>
> Forgetfulness of the world and of everything but God.
> The world has not known You, but I have known You.
> Joy! Joy! Joy! Tears of joy! . . .
>
> My God, are You going to leave me?
>
> Oh, let me not be separated from it forever! . . .
>
> Surrender – complete and sweet.
>
> *Pascal, Memorial; cf. in MSSC pp.189–90*

See also: **fire of love** (▸4).

1. Richard Rolle, *Fire of Love, Prologue, FLRR* p.45.

inner life, **interior life**, **inward life** The awareness of one's own consciousness as an intangible and formless spirit; a life centred around introspection, inward recollection, contemplation (also known as interior prayer, meditation and spiritual practice), and the quest for God within.

The true nature of a human being is soul or spirit, and interior life is the quest for an ever deepening experience of that reality. Hence, Evelyn Underhill writes, "There is no life more real than the interior life of the soul."[1] In fact, lasting comfort and peace can only be found by pursuing the inner life. Outward comforts are, at best, transitory. As Walter Hilton says:

> Because you do not understand your own soul, you neglect your inner life and seek outward consolations like a creature without reason.
>
> *Walter Hilton, Ladder of Perfection 1:79, LPH p.97*

In practice, an interior life has many facets. The Quaker, Thomas Kelly, explains:

> What is here urged are internal practices and habits of the mind. What is here urged are secret habits of unceasing orientation of the deeps of our being about the inward light, ways of conducting our inward life so that we are perpetually bowed in worship, while we are also very busy in the world of daily affairs. What is here urged are inward practices of the mind at deepest levels, letting it swing like the needle, to the polestar of the soul. And like the needle, the inward light becomes the truest guide of life, showing us new and unsuspected defects in ourselves and our fellows, showing us new and unsuspected possibilities in the power and life of goodwill among men. But, more deeply, He who is within us urges, by secret persuasion, to such an amazing inward life with Him, so that, firmly cleaving to Him, we always look out upon all the world through the sheen of the inward light, and react toward men spontaneously and joyously from this inward centre. Yield yourself to Him who is a far better teacher than these outward words, and you will have found the Instructor Himself, of whom these words are a faint and broken echo.
>
> Such practice of inward orientation, of inward worship and listening, is no mere counsel for special religious groups, for small religious orders, for special 'interior souls', for monks retired in cloisters. This practice is the heart of religion. It is the secret, I am persuaded, of the inner life of the master of Galilee. He expected this secret to be freshly discovered in everyone who would be his follower. It creates an amazing fellowship, the church catholic and invisible, and institutes group living at a new level, a society grounded in reverence, history rooted in eternity, colonies of heaven.

> It is the special property of no group or sect, but is a universal obligation and privilege. Roman Catholics have treasured this practice, but have overlaid the authority of the light within by a heavy weight of external ecclesiastical authority. Protestant emphasis, beginning so nobly in the early Luther, has grown externally rationalistic, humanistic, and service-minded. Dogmas and creed and the closed revelation of a completed canon have replaced the emphasis upon keeping close to the fresh upspringings of the inner life. The dearth of rich Protestant literature on the interior aspect of Christian living, except as it bears on the opening experience of conversion, bears testimony to its emphasis being elsewhere.
>
> *Thomas Kelly, Testament of Devotion, TDK pp.5–7*

He who lives an inner life, writes Thomas à Kempis, is wise, inwardly recollected, and not unduly disturbed by outer circumstances or the conduct of others. He "walks by an inner light", and remains unruffled by external affairs:

> He who knows all things at their true worth, and not as they are said or reputed to be, is truly wise, for his knowledge comes from God, and not from man. He who walks by an inner light, and is not unduly influenced by outward things, needs no special time or place for his prayers. For the man of inner life easily recollects himself, since he is never wholly immersed in outward affairs. Therefore his outward occupations and needful tasks do not distract him, and he adjusts himself to things as they come. The man whose inner life is well-ordered and disposed is not troubled by the strange and perverse ways of others; for a man is hindered and distracted by such things only so far as he allows himself to be concerned by them.
>
> *Thomas à Kempis, Imitation of Christ 2:1, ICTK p.69*

In short, he is a good human being, always in touch with the Spirit within:

> He who always concentrates on the inner life becomes restrained, long-suffering, kind and humble. He will also be able to contemplate, theologize, and pray. That is what St Paul meant when he said: "Walk in the Spirit."[2]
>
> *Maximos the Confessor, On Love 4:64, Philokalia, PCT2 p.108*

The means of developing the inner life is contemplation or interior prayer. In the Orthodox Church, this entails repetition of a short prayer, such as the Jesus prayer. As a priest advises the anonymous author of *The Way of a Pilgrim:*

> To attain spiritual enlightenment and become a man of recollected interior life, you should take some one text or other of holy scripture, and for as long a period as possible concentrate, on that alone, all your power of attention and meditation; then the light of understanding will be revealed to you. You must proceed in the same way about prayer. If you want it to be pure, right and enjoyable, you must choose some short prayer, consisting of few but forcible words, and repeat it frequently and for a long while. Then you will find delight in prayer.
>
> *Way of a Pilgrim, WPW p.112*

A monastic life is intended specifically to help develop this inner life. Even so, many monks may have little understanding of the inner life, and may even be disturbed by those who are truly working at developing their inner life:

> Symeon the New Theologian says that, by the instigation of devils, monks leading an insincere life envy true ascetics and do all in their power to disconcert them or expel them from the community. Even well-intentioned monks, who however live an outward life and have no conception of the interior life, take offence at spiritual workers, consider their conduct strange, scorn and slander them, and insult and persecute them in various ways.
>
> *Ignatius Brianchaninov, On the Prayer of Jesus 16; cf. OPJ pp.121–22*

The depth and constancy of inner life varies individually, according to many factors. Baltasar Alvarez (1533–1580), who admits that for fourteen years, "I had been like one who ploughed, but reaped not,"[3] only found a degree of inner peace when he was able to let go of his personal yearnings for the higher kind of prayer, and submit himself to the will of God. Then, he relates:

> I experienced an interior life given by God.... I received the gift of being able to enter within myself in very truth.... Prayer to me is now a placing of myself in His presence.... Sometimes I reason in prayer, according to the understanding given to me concerning the words of divine scripture; and to interior teaching, sometimes I keep silence and rest; and this keeping silence and resting in His presence is a great source of treasure.
>
> *Baltasar Alvarez, in VVBA pp.152–55, in SSM3 p.192*

A monastic life is by no means essential to the development of an inner life. Many spiritual paths advocate living a normal life in the world, while keeping oneself inwardly in the presence of the Divine. Nancy Mayorga, a twentieth-century Californian disciple of Swami Prabhavananda, writes of her own inner life:

> Sometimes I feel that if I sit down and with great painstaking care choose just the right words, I can describe what is meant by an intense inner life. This is one of those times. The whole purpose of life as I see it now is to practise the presence of God at every conscious moment. I used to think that such a state of mind or soul would be conferred suddenly when I succeeded in reaching *samādhi* or union. Now I realize that it is a habit that has to be trained into me, and that *samādhi* is not to be the cause of this perpetual enjoyment but the result and crowning achievement of it. . . .
>
> An inner life at this stage, after six years of intense and honest struggle, is something like this – there will be three or four days, or a week, when God and rapture are immediately available. All you have to do is hold thought steady for an instant and relax any physical or mental tensions that might serve as obstructions, and the current of bliss surges through you and spreads out like a delicious fire to the very smallest capillary. Your mind, your spirit, stands spellbound with awe and gratitude. And these moments are not always calculated. They sometimes sweep upon you unexpectedly in the midst of some activity, in the oddest places, between the aisles at the market, setting the table for dinner, even at the wheel of the car. When it happens in traffic, it has the by-product of making you feel completely safe, untouchable.
>
> But then there will come a period when, after being caught up and held by joy, you feel as though the same hand threw you down pitilessly for some ruthless, unavoidable purpose. No physical pain of being hurled to the ground can compare with the mental anguish of being deprived of a bliss that you thought was yours now to keep. No frustration can equal the frustration of those moments set aside for contemplation, now so empty of any results of any kind. If it is not deliberately a part of a plan to humble you, nevertheless it serves that purpose. You search and wonder and think what you did wrong to turn off the path that was so clear and sure a few days ago. And you pray – you who have never really prayed before – and pray with all humility. And then wait. There's nothing else to do.
>
> *Nancy Mayorga, Hunger of the Soul, HSDM pp.12–13*

On hearing of the experiences of others, it is natural for a seeker to compare them with their own experience; but the author of the *Cloud of Unknowing* cautions:

> You can see by all this that he who only attains and experiences perfect contemplation as the result of great effort, and then but seldom, may easily be wrong if he speaks or thinks or measures others by his own experience, believing that they can only rarely achieve such things, and

> that too after great effort. Similarly, he who attains perfect contemplation whenever he likes may be wrong if he measures others by his own standards, believing that they too can attain it as and when they will. Avoid such ways of thinking. For if and when God pleases, it may well be that those who achieve it at first but seldom, and only after great effort, shall afterwards have it when they will and as often as they like.
>
> *Cloud of Unknowing 72; cf. CU p.129, CUCW pp.147–48, CUEU p.260*

See also: **entering in** (8.2), **epiphany**, **mystical experience**.

1. Evelyn Underhill, *Introduction, CWTA2* p.193.
2. *Galatians* 5:16.
3. Baltasar Alvarez, in *VVBA* p.150, in *SSM3* p.192.

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yogābhyāsa (S/H) 8.5
yoganidrā (S/H) 8.1
yoga shāstra (S/H) 8.5
yogash chitta-vṛitti nirodhaḥ (S/H) 8.5
yoga tantra (S) 8.5
Yom Kippur (He) 8.4
yongs su mya ngan las 'das pa (T) *See* parinirvāṇa 8.1
yongs su skyob pa (T) *See* paritrāṇa 8.4
yóu (C) 8.1
yòurào (C) *See* pradakshiṇā 8.4
yǒuyú nièpán (C) *See* sopadhishesha nirvāṇa 8.1
yù (C) *See* liáo 8.5
yuánguān (C) 8.2
yuánpìn (C) *See* yuánguān 8.2
yuánqiào (C) *See* yuánguān 8.2
yuánshén (C) 8.1
yuánxīn (C) 8.1
yuánxìng (C) *See* xìng 8.1
yǔhuà (C) 8.1
yukti (S) 8.5
yùnqì (C) 8.5
yuwipi (Lakota) 8.5
zabuton (J) 8.5
zad pa shes pa (T) *See* kshaya-jñāna 8.1
zafu (J) 8.5
ẓāhir (A/P) 8.4
zàngshí (C) *See* ālaya-vijñāna 8.1
ẓann (A/P) 8.1
źawq (P) *See* dhawq 8.1
zazen (J) 8.5
ẓefiyah (He) 8.2
zémiè (C) *See* pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha 8.1
zen (J) *See* dhyāna 8.5
zengo (J) *See* jiànwù 8.1
zenshi (J) *See* jhānanga 8.1
ẓeruf (He) 8.5
zhāi (C) 8.4
zhāixīn (C) 8.5
zhàměng (C) 8.1
zhāntuólì (C) *See* gtum mo 8.5
zhào (C) 8.2
zhèng (C) *See* adhigama 8.1
zhèngděng jué (C) *See* samyak-sambodhi 8.1
zhèngjiàn (C) *See* samyag-dṛishṭi 8.1
zhèngjué (C) *See* sambodhi 8.1
zhèngshòu (C) *See* samāpatti 8.1
zhèngzhì (C) *See* sampajañña 8.5
zhēnxīn (C) *See* dàoxīn 8.1
zhēnxìng (C) *See* xìng 8.1
zhēnyán (C) *See* mantra 8.5
zhēnzhī (C) 8.1
zhì (C) 8.1; *see also* jñāna 8.1, liáo 8.5
zhǐ (C) *See* samatha 8.5
zhī (C) 8.1
zhídào (C) *See* chíyī 8.1
zhi gnas (T) *See* samatha 8.5
zhǐguān (C) 8.5
zhǐguǎn dǎzuò (C) *See* shikantaza 8.5
zhìhuì (C) *See* zhì 8.1
zhìhuì yǎn (C) *See* prajñā-chakshus 8.2
zhītí (C) *See* chaitya 8.4
zhìxīn (C) 8.5
zhìyǎn (C) *See* prajñā-chakshus 8.2
zhíyī (C) *See* chíyī 8.1
zhōng (C) 8.1
zhōngyīn (C) *See* bardo 8.3
zhòu (C) *See* dhāraṇī, mantra 8.5
zhù (C) *See* vihāra 8.1
zhuǎnyí (C) *See* āshraya-parāvṛitti 8.1
zhùjī (C) 8.5
zhù nièpán (C) *See* pratishṭhita nirvāṇa 8.1
zhuó (C) 8.1

zì (C) 8.4
zikhr (He) 8.5
źikr (P) *See* dhikr 8.5
zil gyis gnon pa'i skye mched (T) *See* abhibhāyatana 8.5
zìrán (C) 8.1
zìwù (C) 8.1
zìxìng nièpán (C) *See* prakṛiti-parinirvṛita 8.1
żiyāʾ (P) *See* ḍiyāʾ 8.2
Ẓiyyon (He) 8.4
zìzé (C) 8.4
zìzì (C) *See* pravāraṇā 8.4
zohar (He) 8.2
zōng (C) 8.4
zǒngchí (C) *See* dhāraṇī 8.5
zōngpài (C) *See* zōng 8.4
zōshiki (J) *See* ālaya-vijñāna 8.1
zuda (J) *See* dhutanga 8.5
zuhd (A/P) 8.5
zui'i (J) *See* pravāraṇā 8.4
zunnār (A/P) 8.4
zuò (C) *See* dǎzuò 8.5
zuòchán (C) *See* meditation (Daoism), zazen 8.5
zuòwàng (C) 8.5
zǔqiào (C) 8.2

Are there not enough names now?
Is this not the time to stop?

Lǎozǐ, Dàodé jīng 32, TTCW p.65

